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vide page 13.

Herbert and his Mother.

INSTRUCTIVE

TALES,

FOR YOUNG PERSONS,

INTENDED TO AMUSE AND INFORM THE
YOUTHFUL MIND,

COMPRISING,

LASCELLS; OR, THE YOUNG SOLDIER.

LELAND; OR, THE WANDERINGS OF YOUTHFUL
ROMANCE.

A NEW EDITION.

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LASCELLS:

OR

THE YOUNG SOLDIER.



CHAP. I.

HAS the youthful reader, now entering upon the perusal of our first volume, ever visited the neighbourhood of the town of Morpeth, in Northumberland? If so, he has doubtless walked, as we have, in the *Blue-Bell Wood*, with which every visitant of that town is acquainted. It takes its name, as, if he has seen the spot, he will know, from the great number of the flower called the blue-bell that grow within it:

indeed, in the months of May and June, nearly every foot of ground beneath the trees is covered with them.

In a small but neat cottage bordering upon this wood, lived a young widow, of interesting and prepossessing appearance; and whose manners indicated her previous acquaintance with a higher sphere, than that she at present, with resignation indeed, but not with entire self-satisfaction, was seen to occupy. She had an only son, a boy entering upon his fifteenth year, but of a size and stature that to a stranger would have indicated him to be several years older; and with personal recommendations besides, which he appeared to have inherited from his mother, superior

to those of most youths. He was of an open, gallant disposition; tenderly attached to this the only parent he remembered, but prone from his heedless and fearless turn, to rush into youthful mischiefs and extravagancies, which cost her frequent anxieties, and sometimes tears. But the sight of the last upon her cheeks, was what never failed instantly to transport him to sorrow and repentance almost as wild as the conduct that had brought them there. At such moments, he would passionately embrace her, hang upon her neck in an ecstasy of filial feeling and devotedness, intreat pardon with the most ardent supplications, and most commonly end by vowing that never,

never, by a solitary action or a word, would he offend her more. But, alas! promises so rashly made, are too commonly as rashly broken; and Herbert Lascells, not less than the generality of promise-makers and breakers, was an instance of the truth of this observation.

The deceased father of Herbert was the younger son of a Scotch nobleman, and had entered the army at the age of twenty. Being quartered at Carlisle soon after the purchase of his commission, he had there accidentally seen and became attached to a young lady of great beauty and merit, but no fortune, the present tenant of the cottage by the Blue-Bell Wood. A match, he well knew, was this, to which the pride

of the haughty Peer, his father, would never have permitted his consent, and the fair Matilda therefore became his by a private union. Scarcely was the marriage consummated, when the regiment to which he was attached was ordered to the Continent; and there, fighting bravely at the head of his company, he soon afterwards fell. With a presentiment of his early fate, he had, previously to leaving England, intrusted a sealed packet directed to his wife to the care of a friend, with instructions to forward it to her the moment news of so disastrous a nature should arrive, or otherwise to re-send it to him on his return.

Mrs. Lascells, who then still resi-

ded at Carlisle, received this packet, and by another channel the heart-rending intelligence of her husband's death, nearly at the same moment. Her first transports of grief were so violent, as to threaten her own existence: but, by degrees, she recovered sufficient self-possession to inspect the contents of the last sad testimony of the tender concern ever manifested for her by Capt. Lascells. It was found to contain a legal instrument, by which he conveyed to her a small property he had enjoyed from the age of eighteen, independently of his father; a letter to that nobleman; and another to herself, explaining the contents and object of the first, and conjuring her, by every tender recollection of

their short-lived happiness, to overcome grief, and still, were it only for the sake of his intreaties, to be happy.

Heavily did the widowed Matilda sigh over expressions, calculated by their very soothings to increase her sense of the irreparable loss she had sustained. Her first care was to obey the deceased in all that she was immediately *capable* of rendering obedience; and she therefore directly dispatched, by a proper messenger, the letter to Lord Lascells. The performance of this slight, but as she considered it, sacred duty, led her to reflect in what way she could best fulfil the remaining desires of the epistles; for to fulfil them, should it be found in any degree possible, she

was determined. With the feeling of hopeless grief, that takes pleasure only in its own indulgence, she considered that her now sole prospect of any thing resembling *happiness*, was in silently pondering upon the virtues and the affection of him who was for ever sundered from her, in some retired spot, where few would be found to witness, and none to reprove the melancholy to which she was bent to resign herself.

Under the influence of such resolves, she became the occupant of the cottage already more than once alluded to; having, by the advice of a friend, sold the property bequeathed to her for an annuity, from the amount of which she hoped to derive at least

the necessaries of life for herself and one servant-girl; and to find an occasional solace from afflictive thoughts in the society of an amiable couple, a clergyman and his wife, who also resided near the Blue-Bell Wood, and with whom from early life she had been acquainted.

After a residence here of some months, she became the parent of the hero of our tale. This circumstance first gave bitterness to the recollection, that she had as yet received no answer to her husband's letter to Lord Lascells; for one chief object of that epistle, she knew, was, to prevail with his lordship to become at least the protector of that innocent pledge of his Matilda's affection,

which his fondness anticipated would become the loved image in her arms of himself. Lord Lascells, it was now pretty apparent, intended not to acknowledge his son's offspring; and a mother's natural regard taught her to lament the seemingly inevitable loss to her darling child, of those distinctions of rank and fortune, to which by birth he was entitled. Thinking that duty to this child required it of her, she then took a step, to which no other considerations could possibly have become an inducement: she seconded the letter of Captain Lascells to the grandfather of her boy, by one, couched in the most appropriate and respectful terms, from herself.

To this last letter she received an

answer, but from his Lordship's secretary, not himself. In the haughtiest and coldest style, it informed her of Lord Lascells' fixed determination *not to believe* that his deceased son could ever have so disgraced himself, as to marry one so greatly his inferior in rank: it alluded to the Captain's letter as a well-executed and artful *forgery*, the hopes of the writer of which would certainly be frustrated; and ended by the insolent advice, not to give farther trouble to his Lordship on the subject, as all such applications would in future remain unanswered.

Matilda clasped the then smiling infant to her bosom, when she had read this unfeeling and insulting epistle;

and mentally vowed, that never, even at his own earnest request; *should* that grandsire call him a Lascells; trusting to render him an equally honourable and more useful character in life, by bringing him up in ignorance that a *nobleman* was his progenitor, than if she should inspire him with hopes of fortune or grandeur so little likely to be realised. In pursuance of this resolve, she adopted, as her son increased in years, the plainest style of dress that was consistent with a tasteful neatness; she accustomed herself and him to nearly constant employment, occupying the hours that she did not devote to furnishing him with the elements of a plain education, in the humble labours of the dairy and

the spinning-wheel; and, almost from his very infancy, she was perpetually striving to impress upon his mind, that to the exertions of his hands he must in after-life alone look for the means to maintain himself.

Young Herbert, therefore, became, as he advanced in years, little other than the plain country boy, in knowledge of the world, and the general range of his ideas; although the assiduous cultivation of his mind by his fond mother, and the constant presence of her example, gave a refinement to his manners not often the attendant of a completely rural education. It was easily to be perceived too, that his notions on several points were elevated above those of

the rustic lads who were his common playfellows; that in courage he was greatly their superior, and equally so in nobleness of spirit, and a seemingly innate sense of what was honourable both in sentiment and practice. But with all this, the mistakes of his inexperience, and the follies of his wilfulness, were sadly numerous; and gave far too frequent pain, as has been noticed, to one of the best of parents. In fine, he was a compound of bravery, generosity, honour, rashness, and folly; and few were the actions of his youth, that could not be plainly traced to this mixture in him of these various but by no means opposite qualities.

CHAP. II.

IT was a fine morning in June, and young Lascells and his mother were taking a walk together, which had been deprived indeed of its novelty by repetition, but which no familiarity with its natural beauties could entirely divest of their charms.

This walk combined a portion of the Blue-Bell Wood with that of another, separated from the first only by a road, called the *Lady's Chapel Wood*, in the centre of which stand the ruins of an old chapel, dedicated in Popish times to the Virgin Mary—a circumstance from which it derives its name.

Through the Lady's Chapel Wood also runs the clear and beautiful stream of the river Wensbeck; and the spot, taken altogether, has many claims to be considered in the light of a more than commonly beautiful and romantic wilderness. In the course of the walk we mention, the following dialogue took place between our hero and his mother.

HERBERT.

What a strange-looking old ruin is this Lady's Chapel, mother! It always makes me feel I can't tell how, when I look at it.—Only I often think I should like to see many such curious old buildings, in other places, I mean places a great way off, perhaps—where there may be a great many

more of them, and many other curious things, such as we never see nor hear of in these woods, that we've walked in already these hundred times.

MRS. LASCELLS.

Yes, my love, but such sights are only seen by travellers—

HERBERT.

Then I should like to be a traveller, mother.

MRS. LASCELLS.

My dear boy, travellers often pay dearly for the knowledge they acquire of what is curious in other countries, at the same time that they are neglecting to obtain a more useful acquaintance with things, quite as curious and interesting perhaps, that are close to their own doors, at home.

I hope, as you will be entirely without the means to become a traveller, that you are disposed to be more wise; and really I cannot blame your curiosity in regard to this singular ruin, the history of which, I doubt not, would prove as instructive as that of many an one, which English tourists have thought it worth their while to write large books about, merely because they are to be found in places far distant from where they themselves were born. I shall be quite ready to tell you all I know respecting this Chapel; which of course you are aware is a religious foundation; and—

HERBERT.

O, but my dear mother! indeed it is not exactly that—no, not about

religious foundations—that I want to know. I want to—to—not to walk always in the Blue-Bell Wood, and the Lady's Chapel Wood, and then home, and next day in the woods again. I think I should like at this very moment to be—to be—

MRS. LASCELLS.

Yes, any where, I suppose, but at your mother's side, Herbert.

HERBERT.

O, no, no; indeed I did not think at all about being away from you, mother. I only meant that—now doesn't it seem very foolish? but, indeed, I couldn't tell you *in words*, at least not just now, what I meant.

Mrs. Lascells sighed deeply. She

had long before witnessed too many symptoms of that buoyant, sanguine, and aspiring spirit, that possessed her son, to feel at ease when she contrasted it with the path in life, to which her narrow circumstances would render it necessary that he should be confined. The sentiments he had just expressed infinitely strengthened her fears: for the next five minutes of their walk, during which both were silent, she found herself next only to completely miserable. Herbert also, during the same period, looked greatly more serious than usual: at length he resumed the conversation thus.

HERBERT.

Did not *my father* travel a good deal, mother?

MRS. LASCELLS

Not much—not much—

[This was said with a rapid but half-choked utterance; as the early fate of Captain Lascells, preventing in a great degree his acquisition of the species of knowledge for which he too had so ardently panted, arose to her memory, and filled her eyes with uncontrollable tears.]

HERBERT.

There! now have I asked the very question, that I have been all this while resolving not to ask. And I have made you cry too, as you always have done, when I have talked about my father.—Well! what shall I say next? Something just as stupid, I dare say.—Heigho! this travelling

now! Well, but, dear mother, there must be some people who do not travel just for curiosity sake: for instance, *soldiers*. Really, I have often thought how much I should like to be a soldier!

[At these words Mrs. Lascells became pale as death. She grasped almost wildly the youth's arm; looked at him as if she would have seen into his soul; and, had not a fresh flood of tears come to her relief, would probably have fainted. Herbert's exclamations at sight of her distress, were passionately fervid.]

HERBERT.

Mother! dearest mother! what have I said? Do not look so at me: speak to me. Are you ill? What

shall I do for you? Where shall I run for help? Mother! mother! what can have made you thus?

MRS. LASCELLS.

O! my child! I can scarcely even now think it an illusion, that I saw your father, bleeding, dying, in the field of battle! And you too to talk of being a soldier! I conjure you, if you value my peace, my life, never again mention in my ears that dreadful subject.

HERBERT.

O, I will not, my dear mother; never! never!—and so now be quite well again directly. I would not be a soldier, to make you look as you did, just now, though but for a moment, no, not for a thousand worlds.

MRS. LASCELLS.

Well, Herbert, let us return; and say no more about it.

HERBERT.

That I will not, mother; for I cannot bear to see you thus.—And yet, to think now, that because a soldier is just talked of, you should make so certain of his being killed in battle directly!—Well then, suppose now, only suppose, there should be soldiers wanted, only to wear red coats and accoutrements, and travel about, and march to the fife and drum, and see sights, and never to go away from their country to fight at all, would you mind my being such a soldier as that?

MRS. LASCELLS.

You almost make me smile, Her-

bert, in spite of my melancholy thoughts. Such would be strange soldiers! Yes, I think I may safely promise you, that you may be a soldier whenever you can be one without *danger*.

HERBERT.

And you will promise me that, then? How I should enjoy now for such soldiers to be raised, and for me to pay you a visit by surprise in my regimentals, while you laughed yourself at being so tricked into consenting to it.

MRS. LASCELLS.

You are a rattling fellow, Herbert. What a pity it seems, that the world will not permit such light hearts to continue happy!

HERBERT.

Well, but mother, now I come to think of it, it does seem strange, as you say, to talk of *soldiers* and no *danger*. Besides I really think there must be something like a pleasure in danger after all—at least I am much mistaken if I have not sometimes found a pleasure in it. For instance, now; you know, mother, the row of poplars, on one side of the church-yard, that are so high they overlook the tower of the church itself. Well, I have been to the top of the tower, and seen a fine prospect to be sure, but that was all: but I did not feel myself animated, and delighted, and—I can scarce tell you how—at all in comparison as I have felt when

I have climbed nearly to the top of one of those poplars, and there looked down upon the church, while I swung this way and that way with the slender bough—

MRS. LASCELLS.

Good heavens! is it possible?

HERBERT.

O, yes; and I see at once, Mother, you think there might have been some *danger* in that.

MRS. LASCELLS.

O, Herbert! Herbert! how does every day thus bring me some new proof of your unthinking rashness!

HERBERT.

Nay, now, mother, surely that was not so very, very rash.

MRS. LASCELLS.

That I could but cure you of this way of thinking! O, Herbert, that I could but see you confine your thoughts and undertakings to your station in life!

HERBERT.

Well, mother, you will excuse my saying so, but, really, I cannot perceive what my climbing up a poplar-tree has to do with confining my thoughts to my station in life.

MRS. LASCELLS.

That observation would have been extremely rude, Herbert, if its manner had not been so perfectly respectful. I will therefore explain myself so far as to say, that I think

the country-boy, who seeks danger for the love of it, though but in the most trifling actions, *does* attempt to soar above the sphere which an all-wise Providence has allotted him. But let us drop the subject; and, before we go home this morning, pay a visit to our kind friends at the rectory.

As they now proceeded in the direction named, silence was maintained by both mother and son during the remainder of the way. To the worthy Rector, Mrs. Lascells took an opportunity to unburthen her mind, as she had often before done, relative to the too evident symptoms of his father's only failings in her eyes, that appeared in Herbert. The good man confessed

that he knew not how to advise her in the matter; and could only counsel her to commit her anxieties to the supreme director of all things. At the same time, he commended her care to keep the youth in ignorance of the nobility of his descent, at least until such time as a prospect should appear of his recovering the dues of his birth and rank; and acknowledged that the most effectual way to hinder his thoughts from taking an elevation not consonant with his circumstances, seemed to be to continue employing him in rural affairs, and frequently re-impressing it upon his mind, that he was born to live and think like an individual, whose occupation was to be labour, and whose lot obscurity.

After some conversation on general subjects, to which Herbert was admitted, having returned from a contrived ramble in the garden with the clergyman's lady, the mother and son took leave, and returned through the Blue-Bell Wood to their own simple and retired cottage.

CHAP. III:

SOMETHING more than a twelve-month had elapsed from the date of the conversation we have related, when the unusual length of time that Herbert was one day gone to Morpeth, (as he had sometimes before done, by Mrs. Lascell's permission, occasionally at least to vary the scene of his existence,) began to inspire his mother with alarm. Evening came, and he had started considerably before noon, and still he was not returned. As usual, in her troubles and perplexities, Mrs. Lascells now flew to the Rector, to impart her fears, and

obtain counsel; leaving strict instructions with her servant to send Herbert after her immediately he should arrive.

The Rector was not willing to see anything extraordinary in the boy's protracted absence, and cautioned Mrs. Lascells against the premature indulgence of her maternal terrors. But when night was actually come, and without the appearance of Herbert, he began fully to participate in the anxiety he had at first condemned; and, after at length escorting the lady to her abode, remained with her till a late hour, with the kind view of supporting her spirits, and keeping alive hope in her breast, at least as long as he should find it possible to do so. Finally, however, he was obliged to

confess the improbability of her son's return that night, and with an afflicted spirit he himself took the way to the rectory.

The anguish of suspense endured by Mrs. Lascells, on this, in her sleepless night, it must be unnecessary for us to attempt to describe. It will suffice to inform the reader, that pretty early the following morning, the carrier from Morpeth brought a letter from Herbert, which the charms of a fresh can with an unexpected acquaintance, at a little inn by the road-side, had prevented his delivering, as he had solemnly engaged to do, to the youth, on the afternoon of the preceding day. This letter Mrs. Lascells tore open with agitated haste, and read precisely as follows.

Morpeth, 12 at noon.

DEAREST MOTHER,

I have this day availed myself of the promise you gave me nearly a year back in the Lady's Chapel Wood. *I am a Soldier*, without danger of having to fight for my bread; or rather, I believe I should say, I am going, for a little while, to play at soldiers. The Recruiting Sergeant for a regiment in the *Army of Reserve*, with whom I have just entered myself, has explained it all to me, so that I have not been at all rash in what I have done, you may depend upon me. The *Army of Reserve*, you must know, has been planned for the purpose of getting together a number

of young men, and enterprising lads, who are never to fight without the French come; and the French, you know, are such cowards, that they are certain never to come at all. So as I happen to be tall and strong, the Sergeant took me to be eighteen at least, and said that I should do for one; and finely I have cheated him in it to be sure. And we are never to leave England, or at least only to go to Ireland if we are wanted there, and that will only be like going to a different part of our own country. I should have just come home to tell you all about it, only the Sergeant said there would not be time, and that as I had your promise to let me be such a soldier as I am going to be,

that would be sufficient. And he tells me he has no doubt I shall soon be made a Sergeant like himself; and a Sergeant, he says, is a gentleman; and though you know, mother, you have often told me I had no prospect in life but that of labouring with my hands, I hope you will acknowledge yourself mistaken, when you hear that I have a prospect of being a sergeant and a gentleman. And I suppose you will hardly know me in my regimentals, when I call upon you in a fortnight's time; for we are only going to Carlisle now, and I shall have liberty then to come and see you, and very often in future too, for as I told you before, we are hardly to be real soldiers, but only an Army of Reserve.

So till I see you again, believe me to remain,

Dearest Mother,

Your dutiful & affectionate Son,

HERBERT LASCELLS.

P. S. An Army of Reserve means, I believe, an army that is to supply the regular soldiers with fresh troops when they are wanted: but then no one is obliged to become a regular soldier without he chooses it, that is, without he *volunteers*, and then he gets a great deal of money besides, which they call his bounty. If I were a volunteer, you may be certain I should send you all my bounty directly; for of course I shall have no occasion for money now I am to be kept and clothed at the expense of the government,

and so many pounds might be of some service to you I daresay.—But you may be sure *I* shall not volunteer, since the remembrance of how you looked in the Lady's Chapel Wood, when I only talked of being a fighting soldier, will be quite sufficient to prevent my thinking of that.—Though I own I should have liked to be a soldier in earnest, if it had not been so very, very disagreeable to you.—Farewell, dearest mother, till this day fortnight.—Again and again affectionately, yours,

HERBERT LASCELLS.

Mrs. Lascell's consternation on the perusal of this letter may be readily supposed. She instantly communi-

cated it to the Rector; and that worthy gentleman wanted not to be urged immediately to set out for Morpeth, to see if, upon application to a magistrate there with whom he was acquainted, any steps could be employed for the immediate restoration of our youth. He had little doubt, as he informed Mrs. L., that Herbert might easily be recovered by the authority of his friend, if the proper methods could be taken before he was formerly entered at Carlisle; and only regretted that, owing to the carrier's delay, time had been given for the military party to gain so greatly the start of the pursuit that should immediately be made. He however assured the lady of his

most strenuous exertions, and left her in a state of mind more endurable by far than the agony of uncertainty and suspense, into which she had been at first thrown by the non-appearance from Morpeth of her beloved son.

Meanwhile, Herbert, with the Sergeant, and one or two other recruits, were pursuing their way to Carlisle. Their road had at first laid over that wild and solitary tract, which extends between Morpeth and Hexham. However, the walk was enlivened by the beauty of the day, the gay discourse of the Sergeant, and the bright dreams of our youth, that ere long he too would be seen

wearing a non-commissioned officer's sash and sword.

Their first resting-place was a little pot-house by the road-side, in front of which hung from a branch of an old oak the sign of the King's Head. Beneath the tree were benches, and a sturdy table, at which the travellers needed no invitation to seat themselves. Bread and cheese, and ale, were called for by the Sergeant, who generously intimated that he would be answerable for all expenses; and, as the repast proceeded, so ably did he exert those powers of good-humoured and entertaining small-talk, seasoned with descriptions of the felicity of the soldier's life, with which he had at first prevailed over our hero's

ready credulity, that Herbert thought he had never before met with so engaging a companion. It is true, his opinion in this respect a little altered, when, on suddenly missing a recruit from his side, our Sergeant, in his first fears that the man had escaped, poured forth such a volley of oaths and horrid imprecations, that Herbert was thunderstruck, and then first began to perceive in himself some symptoms of repentance for having engaged in so wild an expedition.

Reflections of a nature not very agreeable, occupied him till the party reached a rising ground, not very distant from the spot where they had halted; when arrived at which, Herbert involuntarily looked behind him,

and saw far off the high country near Morpeth, and made no doubt that the clumps of contiguous trees were the Blue-Bell and Lady's Chapel Woods. The sight seemed to effect a sudden and thorough revolution in his ideas; for he instantly would have given up all the golden prospects he had indulged, to have been once more with his mother in the cottage by the wood-side. But regret, he felt, came too late; and he summoned up his spirits to proceed, apparently as light-hearted as before, with his companions.

But the Sergeant had not failed to notice the change that had taken place in his young charge; and both on account of it, and of his fears that

pursuit would very probably be made after the youth, he urged the party to expedition on their route. Accordingly they descended at a quick pace the other side of the hill, towards Hexham; which town, as it was so late in the day when they left Morpeth, they did not however reach till several hours after dark.

At Hexham, their accommodations for the night were but indifferent; but this, and all other such disagreeable incidents, Herbert was of a disposition to make little account of. Rising pretty early the next morning, they had travelled a considerable distance before noon; and, pursuing their walk after dinner with unabated energy, the heat of the afternoon soon began

to render repose extremely desirable. The Sergeant therefore proposed, that they should retire for a while to the shade of a little coppice by the road-side; and if they could there get a nap, he said, it would so refresh them that they could more than make up for their lost time in the cool of the evening.

All took their leader's advice, and laid themselves down under the trees. It was not long before Herbert alone remained awake, thought preventing his so speedily composing himself as his companions. As he lay, he could easily perceive whatever occurred upon the road, although the foliage was thick enough to screen him and his comrades from the observation of

all passengers. The sound of wheels arrested his attention; and immediately afterwards a single-horse chaise passed in the direction he was pursuing, in which were seated two gentlemen, one of whom he knew to be his mother's friend, the Rector.

This startled him exceedingly, as he could not conceive the object of the journey of at least one of the parties; and yet a certain uneasy feeling at the circumstance prevented his issuing from the coppice to accost them. The fact was, that the Rector was accompanied by his friend the Magistrate of Morpeth; the latter having readily offered his personal services, and the use of his chaise, to assist in the recovery of our youth.

But owing to the wood's enveloping the military party at this unlucky moment, and to other equally unfortunate events, the object of these kind friends of Mrs. Lascells was defeated, as will be seen in the sequel.

On the fourth night from their setting out, having about noon of this day passed the wild black heaths near the Roman Wall, and entered the County of Cumberland, they reached the place of their destination, Carlisle. The Sergeant lost no time in passing Herbert and the other recruits through the necessary forms; this ceremony taking place early on the day following their arrival. Next day, our hero obtained his uniform, and began to learn his military duty;

and when he returned to his quarters at evening, it was not, we will undertake to say, with absolute displeasure, that he heard the compliments of his landlady on his handsome appearance, or observed the confirmation of her testimony presented by a large glass which was suspended in her parlour. Meanwhile, the Sergeant congratulated himself on having brought the regiment a recruit so creditable to his skill in that service; and indeed was greatly disposed to wonder at his own good luck, in not having had the prize snatched out of his hands by the interposition of the lad's friends.

Yet neither had the efforts of those friends been wanting. The Rector,

and his associate in the pursuit of Herbert, had easily traced his steps to Hexham; and though they had obtained no intelligence of him much beyond that town, owing to the Sergeant's party taking their repose in the wood, as we have related, they had resolved to proceed even to Carlisle, thinking it possible that by some chance they had passed the youth upon the road, and that at any rate they should be able to take measures at that place to prevent his actual entry into the army.

But, owing to information they afterwards received, relative to another recruiting sergeant and his party, whom they erroneously concluded to be those they were in quest of, they

directly made the best of their way upon the road to Appleby; and not discovering their mistake till they arrived at that town, the opportunity of achieving their object was lost irrecoverably. Ultimately, the good Rector returned to Mrs. Lascells without having effected his purpose, to her utter grief and dismay; while Herbert was encountering the mingled impressions produced upon his mind by scenes, faces, and a manner of life entirely strange, and, before many days had been spent in Carlisle, was betrayed into a step he had neither intended nor anticipated as a possibility.—But his further history will most properly be pursued in our next following chapter.

CHAP. IV.

THE first time Herbert appeared upon parade, he went through his evolutions so greatly to the satisfaction of his officers, that he received unusual praises; whilst his uncommonly good figure, and open martial air, created an universal impression in his favour. The Sergeant too continued to ply him with flatteries; for, as it now began to appear, he had a still further design upon our youth, and this was to get him to volunteer from the Army of Reserve to the troops of the line.

With this design, he was continu-

ally lamenting in his presence that so fine a lad should be deprived of the opportunity of making a figure in the world; adding that in the King's service he would infallibly be promoted before he was many weeks older, and that a young fellow better calculated to do honour to his Majesty's troops, and shine as an officer, he had never had the luck to clap eyes on. All this, however, produced nothing in Herbert, but the wish that his engagements to his mother had left him free to follow the dictates of his inclination: he constantly replied, that nobody had ever a greater desire to follow the profession so strongly recommended, and that he himself believed he should soon rise in the

regular army; but, at the same time, that duty to a parent, and the obligation of his promises, forbade it. The Sergeant would either affect to laugh at these scruples, or endeavour to prevail with him by arguments against them; but he had the mortification to find that his efforts of every kind were without avail, and that his only resource was in a plan, which in such cases has but too generally proved successful.

Ten days had now transpired since their leaving Morpeth, and the morrow would bring that, upon which, agreeably to the Sergeant's specious promises, our hero was to be allowed leave to set out from Carlisle to visit his mother. The Sergeant, at the

time he made this promise, well knew that it would not be in his power to keep it; but as the youth still dreamt of nothing else than its exact performance, his deceiver became the more earnest to dispatch his designs, since the discovery of his duplicity would no doubt overturn all his influence with Herbert. On the morning of the day at which we are arrived, therefore, meeting the youth upon his customary walk after parade, under the Castle walls, he accosted him in his usual gay, good-humoured style, and, after a few general remarks, ended by inviting him to meet a few brother non-commissioned officers at his lodgings to supper. Herbert frankly accepted an offer, that

apparently at least was so frankly made, being chiefly flattered by the idea of finding himself alone, of all the privates of the regiment, considered company for his superiors in military rank.

At the appointed hour he reached the Sergeant's lodgings, and found the non-commissioned officers al-
luded to already arrived. He was received with distinguished signs of welcome, and could not perceive that he was looked upon by any one present in the light of an inferior. The supper was substantial, the ale exhilarating, the company merry, and all the talk about the pleasures and perpetual variety of the soldier's life. The meal ended; pipes and grog

were produced. Herbert refused to smoke, having never taken a pipe into his lips in his life; which however he did not choose to say, thinking perhaps the confession would be derogatory to his dignity as a supposed stripling of eighteen. The grog he did not so steadily object to partaking of; and its effects, uniting with that of the ale, were soon pretty apparent in one so totally unaccustomed to strong liquors of any kind.

Need we enlarge in our description of this scene? The result was that which takes place in the case of nearly all raw recruits situated as was Herbert: drinking was continued to a late hour; the youth was completely

overcome by it, and by the fumes of the tobacco from his companions; and in a state almost of stupefaction gave his consent to volunteer for the King's service. At the usual time next morning, and before the effects of the liquor had subsided, he was led to be sworn in, and receive his bounty; after the performance of which ceremonies, his gay comrades left him to reflect upon all the consequences at his leisure.

Scarcely conscious of what had occurred, Herbert staggered home to his quarters, and needing no inducement after setting up all night to throw himself upon his bed, was soon sunk in the most profound repose. He knew not exactly how long he

had slept; but he was awakened by the roll of the drum for evening parade, and in the first confusion of his senses was unconscious whether he was at Morpeth or Carlisle, at military quarters or in the Blue-Bell Wood. The reality forced itself upon his mind with the jingle of his bounty money, as he first turned and then sat upright on his bed: he sat for the few following seconds, while the loud roll of the drum still continued, an image of blank despair. His fond mother, the cottage of his nativity, the woods whose pleasant walks he had so recently despised, all rushed upon his memory, connected with the idea that he was parted from them, perhaps, for ever.

In the bitterness of self-reproach, he next remembered his so solemn engagements to the most affectionate of parents, *not* to take the very step into which he had allowed himself to be seduced; and, for the first time, he seriously felt remorse for having quitted Morpeth without obtaining his mother's consent. In fact, his conduct in this instance now first presented itself to him in its true light, as *a most imprudent, unwarrantable, and undutiful proceeding*, to which the conversation with his parent in the Lady's Chapel Wood afforded so very slight a sanction, that he wondered how he had ever been led to conceive of it as any sanction at all. The glimpse he had had of the

worthy Rector on the road then recurred to his fancy, and he directly saw that the only object of that good man's journey must have been his restoration to the arms of his mother. The affliction doubtless endured by his mother herself during his absence was next contemplated, and oh! with how much agony!

He was actually in tears when the false Sergeant entered his apartment, and in a tone of sharpness which Herbert had never before noticed in him, asked if he could not hear the drum? Herbert looked at him at first with some surprise; but this harshness had a better effect upon him than would the most opposite conduct; it seemed the signal for

him to summon up his fortitude, and he was, however young, of that lofty tone of character, which could best enable him to obey the call. Without speaking, therefore, he again looked at the Sergeant with dignity, through the tears which he attempted not either to wipe away or to conceal, while he evinced by action his immediate readiness to accompany him. The expression of his countenance was that of a high and generous spirit, betrayed into conduct it repented by the arts of a mean and little one; its sorrow seemed purposely retained for reproach to its betrayer; its fortitude told him that it could bear the worst, however unprepared. The Sergeant himself appeared struck,

and even touched by something like remorse, at the noble bearing of the young recruit; and muttering, that the muster-roll of the regiment to which Herbert now belonged, with his name included, would be called in a few minutes, but that he (the Serjeant) would procure his excuse, as he had only entered that morning, he was about to depart alone. But Herbert manfully told him, that he was as ready to pass muster as himself, and they hastened together to the Castle-Yard.

Herbert answered with the most cool composure to his name, and went through his part on parade with the steady promptitude of a veteran. After their exercise, the command to

form squares by companies gave an emotion to the whole regiment; as this evolution was never performed but for the purpose of hearing general orders, either for a march, or in relation to some matter of considerable military importance. The orders were read, and were found to contain peremptory instructions for every man to prepare himself to leave Carlisle at day-light next morning!

Thus, before he had completed his sixteenth year, was Herbert Lascells, as a consequence of a single indiscretion, a momentary forgetfulness of the deference due from a son to a parent, engaged for life to a profession, of the real difficulties and hardships of which he had not an idea, and

about, as it appeared, immediately to enter into the full career of his future employments, it might be, in another and distant country!—Reader! beware! The errors of Herbert were not of a common kind. They sprung, it is true, from a seemingly inborn disposition to rashness and imprudent enterprise; but it was his ingenuous and unsuspecting nature, that at Morpeth first afforded the wily Sergeant a handle wherewith to convert them to his purposes. Herbert had no tendencies towards the sickly sensibilities, and feverish restlessnesses, of what is commonly called *romance*; his proneness to action arose from the native energies of a vigorous mind, and a frame as

vigorously constituted. Beware, then, reader, whatever be your station in life, lest, if ever situated like Herbert, your conduct should be as blameworthy, and yourself unprovided with as good excuses for it—lest its effects should be as severe, and your fortitude unequal like him to sustain them.

CHAP. V.

HERBERT spent the brief hours allotted him for preparation, in penning an epistle to his mother, most penitentially informing her of his having been surprised into becoming a regular soldier, and inclosing his bounty money for her use. But his letter was much more than this. When contrasted with that received from Morpeth, it seemed at first impossible that it should have been penned by the same writer. Instead of the childish tone, the simple credulity, elation, and extravagance of hope, so manifest in the first, it exhi-

bited a strong sense of having acted wrongfully, together with the sincerest sorrow for having become a source of affliction to his parent, and the firmest resolves bravely to bear all the consequences that should attach to his own person. It was candid, manly, sensible, and resigned; appearing the language of one, to whom less than a fortnight's experience, followed by self-repentance, had singularly given the wisdom which is not always reaped from years. In fine, this letter gave all the balm to the wounded spirit of his mother, that it was at the moment capable of receiving; for having, since the Rector's return without her son, given herself up to despair, fearing his

death, or even worse, the assurance that he was still alive, to whatever dangers about to be exposed, imparted something like a feeling of comfort. The steadiness of character, that ran throughout the epistle, could not fail also most pleasingly to surprise her; and in spite of herself, the prospect painted by Herbert of his returning home, and that ere very long, with honour and promotion, seemed to rise before her like a vision of happiness for the future. And as, though her son informed her of his immediate departure from Carlisle, *probably* for the Continent, it was out of his power to state the actual place of his destination, it immediately appeared that all farther efforts used

for his recovery, must, from the uncertainty in what quarter to employ them, be fruitless: and this conviction gave her a resolution derived, like Herbert's, from necessity, to look forward with resignation to whatever might henceforth be his fate.

The regiment, at the hour arranged, was equipped, and took the road to the coast. Here transports were in readiness to receive them, and the whole embarked, with a fair wind, for Portsmouth; where they were to land, and be re-shipped, for what part of the world they were not as yet informed. During this comparatively short voyage, Herbert had sufficient experience of what it was to be confined within a very small space, from

which there was no escape, with profligate and abandoned men, and coarse, if not vicious women. He learned what it was besides, to lounge away long and weary days on a ship's deck in the same society, and to sleep at night in darkness and noisome air, amidst numbers of such, below. But he bore these inconveniences with the temper of a martyr, thinking them a just punishment for his treatment of so excellent a mother, and only longing to be able to lose the sense of what he now suffered in the services of the 'tented field.'

On arriving at Portsmouth, the soldiers were marched to Hilsea Barracks, near that town; and many days had not here elapsed, before young

Lascells, whose superiority to the general run of private soldiers, had very early become apparent, was promoted to the rank of *Corporal*. A few days afterwards, the company to which he was attached, was embarked on board an East Indiaman; and the remainder of the regiment being distributed in other vessels, the whole set sail for the East Indies.

With a depression of spirits, Herbert found himself unable to subdue, he seated himself on the forecastle of the Indiaman, and continued there for several hours, a prey to his melancholy reflections. He had found time just prior to his embarkation, to send a third letter to Mrs. Lascells, apprising her of the quarter of the globe to

which he was to be dispatched; and his thoughts continued for some time in unison with the subject-matter of his epistle, and the person to whom it was addressed. On the last account alone, we need not wonder that they were tinged with an uncontrollable sadness.

The passage through the Needles, which are high pointed rocks near the coast of the Isle of Wight, and the views of that lovely island itself which appeared from the deck of the vessel, gave a little relief to the general turn of his contemplations. For some time the ship traversed the waves so close under the island, that he could count the trees nearest the water's edge, and could trace the

windings of the lanes and hedges. But when the trees, the buildings, and the shores of Old England gradually receded from his sight—when the thought arose, that he might now be viewing for the last time the country of his birth, the land that contained all that was dear to him—tears forced their way to his eyes in spite of his most heroic resolutions.

We pass over the particulars of this voyage, which lasted five months, but was attended with nothing remarkable. At the end of that time, the ship anchored in Diamond Harbour, which is no other than one of the mouths of the great Indian river Ganges; and the regiment immediately proceeded in boats up the stream

to Calcutta. The transition to these boats from the unwholesome closeness of the ship, was extremely agreeable to Herbert, notwithstanding the heat of the climate, to which all were necessarily much exposed upon their passage.

Calcutta was found by several to be a much handsomer and more spacious town than they had expected to meet with out of England; and Fort William, in which the regiment was stationed, is really a series of noble buildings and fortifications, all of white stone, and containing several fine squares, decorated with gravelled walks and rows of trees. Native servants here attend all Europeans; so that even the private English sol-

dier is in many respects a gentleman in comparison with his situation in his own country. As for Herbert, being very shortly raised to a *Sergeant's* Post, he enjoyed a proportionate share of these advantages; and his birth, or lodging, was fitted out in what he deemed a handsome manner; containing, amongst other articles after the manner of the country, a set of varnished and splendidly gilt chairs; a table of sesoo wood, which resembles our mahogany; and a carved and ornamented bedstead of the same material, hung with the finest white muslin curtains.

After some little time spent in a manner that was only wanting in activity to complete Herbert's satis-

faction, the regiment was ordered to Dinapore, an European station upon the Ganges, about six hundred miles above Calcutta. This expedition was to be performed in large boats, thatched over for the accommodation of the men, and they were expected to arrive at the place of their destination in about four weeks. Accordingly, they set out, and proceeded a certain number of miles every day; after which, all were allowed to scatter themselves over the country, at their discretion, provided that they returned by a stated hour in the evening.

Herbert had many opportunities on these occasions, of observing the very primitive manners and customs of the inoffensive but superstitious Hindoos;

as well as of remarking the most curious natural productions of the country. Among the latter, he included the various kind of palm trees, known by their long and slender shafts, crowned with tufts of broad and glossy leaves; the bamboo, which in appearance somewhat resembles the English willow; and the mangoe, which produces an extremely fine fruit, and bears a blossom that scents the air with a perfume, reminding him of that of the primroses growing on the hedge-banks round his native woods.

The Barracks at Dinapore are regular and handsome buildings of white stone, consisting of two large squares, which contain most convenient ranges of apartments for the officers, and

long and spacious halls, in which the private soldiers and non-commissioned officers are lodged with the greatest comfort; the latter enjoying the advantage of possessing what are called the corner births, which they have the means of rendering quite private. The buildings are all of a single story, and have many high and arched windows, fitted up, on account of the heat of the climate, not with glass, but green lattice-work. The areas of the squares, and the walks surrounding them, are kept extremely neat; so that every thing in the way of external appearance, and internal convenience, is provided for the European soldier at this station.

The soldiers were indeed uncom-

monly pleased with these barracks, after their long confinement to the thatched boats; and Herbert not less so than the rest. In his birth at Dinapore, he lived with even more magnificence than at Calcutta; and his good mother, doubtless, would have smiled, had she been able to observe our hero seated at his meals, and practising some little airs of state, while his black man stood officiously behind him, keeping off the flies with a fan, or *chowry*, as it is called in that country.

To observe the varieties of the place, he occasionally crossed by a little bridge in rear of the Barracks to the Bazar, or Black Town, inhabited by people who obtain their sub-

sistence by providing the soldiers with provisions and other necessary articles. This town forms a striking contrast to the habitations of the Europeans, as it consists entirely of mud huts, without either windows or chimnies, ranged in little narrow streets, in the midst of which are stalls covered with a variety of wares, such as pottery, fruits and vegetables, brass vessels, chintzes and muslin, painted umbrellas for the sun, curious shoes, beads, trinkets, &c. Near the Bazar, are a few larger and better houses, some occupied by rich natives, and others by English gentlemen; and the gardens and open spaces around are planted with the luxuriant trees peculiar to the climate.

At last, this state of indolent repose was exchanged for what young Lascells infinitely preferred, namely, active service. War broke out in India, several of the native princes rising in arms against the English government, and the troops at Dinapore were ordered to join their countrymen in all haste.—And now Herbert had an opportunity of exhibiting to advantage, and in their appropriate sphere, the high and daring qualities with which Nature had invested him; but which, in his present situation, surrounded by luxurious softness, endangered by youth, and unprotected by parental guardianship, a little more inaction might have urged to vicious pursuits.

We will not follow him through his various campaigns in India, except to relate his successive and rapid promotions in the army. After the very first battle, his gallantry and good conduct having been particularly remarked by the Governor who was present, he was made an Ensign on the field. Shortly afterwards he became Lieutenant, and then Captain; and just previously to the termination of the war, was raised to the command of a regiment. All this occurred before he was quite of age; although, as already remarked, he looked several years older than in reality he was.—But we must quit him for a short time, to return to Mrs. Lascells, in her cottage by the Blue-Bell Wood.

CHAP. VI.

SUCCESSIVE returns of the India fleet had not failed regularly to bring Mrs. Lascells letters from her son. But the last fleet had brought no tidings from Herbert; owing, though the lady was unacquainted with the fact, to the circumstance of his having been engaged in active hostilities with the enemy, in the interior of the country, when it sailed. The dread that he had fallen in battle, like his father, or by the fatal diseases of the climate, immediately therefore took possession of her mind; and she was a long time inconsolable for his sup-

posed loss. The good Rector in vain attempted to convince her that her fears were unreasonable, or at least premature; her husband's fate had left an impression on her mind, that made an early death appear but the natural consequence of the military profession, and she could not be persuaded to indulge a hope of ever more seeing her beloved child.

One fine summer evening, just as the sun was setting behind the hills, the Rector and his lady were sitting beside her near her cottage door, and endeavouring to revive hope in her almost totally despairing breast. As they conversed, the shade of a tall figure suddenly flitted across the casement, and the figure itself, ha-

bited in a long blue military coat, and a slouched hat, drawn far over the face as if for concealment, as hastily was presented at the open door. The ladies mutually exhibited some symptoms of alarm; which the stranger perceiving, with the exclamation of "Mother!" he directly pulled off his disguise, and discovered to all the robust and finely-formed person, in full military uniform, of Colonel Lascells.

Mrs. Lascells fainted, in her first emotions of joy and surprise; but, being speedily recovered, awoke to all the happiness of the fond mother, delighted with the endearing embraces of her darling son. The mutual explanations that took place,

and the felicity manifested in the countenances of all, we need not describe. The congratulations of the Rector and his lady were as ardent as they were sincere; and a full hour was spent in continued expressions of the satisfaction and enjoyment experienced by all present.

When the warmth of these first emotions had somewhat subsided, the conversation naturally turned upon the intentions of Colonel Lascells, relative to his future pursuits in life.

He replied: "I love my profession, and have neither wish, nor design, under existing circumstances, to quit it. Could I indeed see my mother placed in that rank of life,

and surrounded with that affluence, which I have learnt are but her rights, I should think it my duty, for her sake, and in consideration of my having become a soldier contrary to her expressed wishes, to leave the army now that I find myself again in my native country, and devote the rest of my days, as a too easy penance for my fault, to her happiness at home. But since Providence appears to have thrown me in the path, by pursuing which I shall probably acquire fortune, and perhaps personal nobility, in lieu of that nobility of birth of our title to which we seem to be deprived, I hold it equally my duty not to pause in my career, at least until I have provided an honourable competence

for the future years of the parent, to whose affection I owe so much."

Tears of tenderness and joy, mixed however with the apprehension of again losing her son, started into the eyes of Mrs. Lascells. "O, my Herbert!" she exclaimed, "could I but prevail with you never, never more to quit our Northumbrian woods, your mother, and the country of your birth! Be assured that I am content with my present station, and shall be completely happy while blest with the knowledge of your safety. But, if you again seek the dangers of the soldier's life!—O, Herbert, will you then suffer your mother throughout her existence to be the prey to the anxieties she *must* feel, while any dear

to her are daily exposing themselves to unheard-of hardships, to disease, to wounds, to death?

“Could I but see you in the possession of your dues, my dearest mother, I would not,” replied the Colonel.

“A bargain! and I am witness;” good-humouredly exclaimed the Rector: “who knows even yet what may happen?”—And as he spoke, a chaise and four was seen descending the road down the hill-side, with the speed almost of light, and it rivetted the attention of all until it stopped directly opposite the cottage-door.

Before the party could recover from their surprise, a gentleman, dressed in black, darted from the

vehicle, and enquired for Mrs. Lascells. She tremulously informed him that she was the person he had named.

The stranger bowed. "You will excuse my abruptness," he said, "but the business upon which I am come is important, and requires dispatch. I am executor under the will of the late Lord Lascells"—but, pausing, he continued, "perhaps you had received no intelligence of his lordship's death?"

Mrs. Lascells faintly (for a thousand mingled sensations rushed at once upon her) replied, that she had not.

The stranger again bowed. "Madam," he went on, "it is then my duty in the first place to apprise you

of that circumstance; and next to state, that his eldest son having died on his travels abroad, his lordship has bequeathed his property, upon proof made that you are the lawful widow of his second son, also deceased, to *the celebrated Colonel Lascells, whose exploits in India have rendered him so famous*, (these are the words of the will, my dear madam,) upon proof also made that the said Colonel Lascells is the legitimate descendant of his said second son."

"I have documents to prove both in my possession," cried the Rector, starting from his chair, while Mrs. Lascells, overcome by her emotions, sunk to her's. "And," continued the warm-hearted gentleman, "most hap-

pily, Colonel Lascells is now present, to hear from your mouth of his good fortune."

The Colonel rose. The legal gentleman, for such it now sufficiently appeared he was, bowed infinitely more profoundly than before. "*My Lord,*" said he, "I shall execute the remaining duties imposed upon me, whenever I am honoured with your lordship's commands."

The first impulse of Lord Lascells, for this title we also must now give our hero, was most tenderly to embrace his mother, and assure her that the promise he had but just made her, under such little expectation of what had since happened, should be sacredly observed. As soon as a toler-

able degree of calmness again possessed the party, they all proceeded to the Rectory, where the documents mentioned by the good clergyman were produced, to the entire satisfaction of the late Lord Lascells' executor, and not less so, it may be presumed, to that of all present besides. And it was agreed, before the company separated for the night, that all should proceed, on the day following, to make the final arrangements, at Lascells Castle.

Let the reader conceive of Lascells Castle, then, as the future residence of Herbert, Lord Lascells, and his mother. By years of desert, crowned with glory, he had amply compensated for the leading error of his youth; and

both he and Mrs. Lascells were, as they deserved to be, through their future lives, as happy as perhaps it is ever permitted mortals to become in this world. And it was no inconsiderable addition to the felicity of both, that Lord Lascells, soon after he was put in possession of his title, married a young lady of equal rank, and of singular beauty and accomplishments; while their children inherited the virtues, not less than the wealth, of their parents, and were universally admired and beloved in that part of Scotland where they resided.

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LELAND:

OR THE

WANDERINGS OF YOUTHFUL ROMANCE.



CHAP. I.

“How can you tell me *Romances* are hurtful reading sir?”—said the young Augustus one morning to his Tutor, when the latter, upon entering the study, found his pupil busy over the ‘*Mysteries of Udolpho*,’ instead of the problem in Euclid, the solution of which should by that time have been ready. “Look, sir,” continued the youthful enthusiast, “at

this fine passage, so full of sentiment and devotion, describing the feelings of ———, produced by the tranquil beauty of a summer's evening!"

"Look at your Euclid, sir," was Mr. Mason's reply.

But seeing the tears start into his pupil's eyes at this reproof—"My dear Augustus," said the perhaps too indulgent Tutor, "should I once more pardon your inattention to my orders, and forgetfulness of your appointed lessons, may I trust that it will be for the last time?"

Augustus was silent; it is to be feared from pride; his eyes still wandered to the half-open page of his favourite 'Mysteries,' though his

hand was extended to the detested Euclid.

“Shew me the passage you are so charmed with,” said Mr. Mason, kindly. Augustus eagerly pointed to it.

“Sentiment and devotion!” repeated the Tutor, when he had perused it: “the consequence, as you truly observe, of our heroine’s witnessing the beauties of a fine summer’s evening: and I find reflections very similar upon a fine morning.—Pray, my young friend, have you been able to discover a rainy night, or a foggy morning, in the whole volume?”

Augustus stared.

“And yet,” continued Mr. M,

“ though we rarely find bad weather in romances, this *work-day world*, as it has been called, of ours, abounds with it: and sentiment is as rational, and devotional feelings as proper, I should imagine, in rain as in sunshine.”

The Tutor paused: but no observation escaping from his pupil, for in truth this reasoning was of a nature to which his mind was too little accustomed, he proceeded:—

“ You are in your thirteenth year, Augustus Leland. You have thinking powers, and talents for expressing yourself, somewhat beyond your age; together with abilities for study, adequate to the acquisition of almost any species of learning. Yet, owing

to your not having followed that *course of study* my experience enabled me to point out you, your mind is excited, heated, rather than improved, by what it has acquired; and is in danger, indeed, of being debased, and ruined, through the pernicious luxury of romance-reading.

The youth was now, though not with the best possible grace, again recurring to his Euclid; but, with a good-natured smile, Mr. Mason prevented him. “No, turn to your admired description in the romance,” said this gentleman: “we will make that the subject of this morning’s lesson.” Augustus complied, though with a look of still greater surprise than before.

“ I have observed,” said Mr. M., taking up the book, “ that the religion of romances consists almost entirely in the mere indulgence of our natural feelings, aroused by observation of a fine prospect, or the glories of the rising and setting sun. Yet such feelings, my dear Augustus, experience has shewn us, are powerless to sustain us in the actual practice of our religious duties, and, when indulged beyond their rational and just bounds, but little conducive to our after peace.”

Augustus now spoke, and somewhat abruptly: nay, he so far forgot himself as to reply by some rather pert observations, in defence of his favourite authors; observations, evinc-

ing far too much confidence in his own judgment, and too little deference for that of his Tutor. These Mr. Mason very properly reprehended.

“ I have endeavoured, sir,” said he, his countenance assuming an expression of severity, “ observing the species of reading to which unfortunately you are so much attached, to warn you betimes, and lead you from the flowery path of fancy and over-refined feeling, into the high-road of well settled principle. I regret exceedingly to say, that hitherto my efforts have been as ill seconded by parental authority, as unimproved by your obedience. But, for the future, depend on me, no exertions shall be wanting on my part, by

means of a strict enforcement of those studies to which you are foolishly so averse, to moderate your conceits and high-flown feelings, while I would strengthen and exalt your principles."

So saying, Mr. Mason left our hero (a hero literally in his own opinion) to meditate on what had passed, until the hour when study would next require their meeting.

CHAP. II.

FROM a sentence which escaped Mr. Mason at nearly the close of the last chapter, it may be conjectured that his authority over young Augustus was not remarkably well established; a circumstance for which it now becomes our duty to account, as well as to narrate some particulars in the previous history of the youth, of importance to the proper understanding of his present character and future adventures.

Leland was the only son of a doating mother, who had been left, soon after the birth of a younger female

child, in the state of widowhood. Unhappily, therefore, he never had known the kind severity of a father's care; and his errors had not been checked, because not properly understood, by his all-indulgent maternal parent. The family seat was the remnant of an ancient castle, situated on the banks of the meandering Wye: it had formerly been a place of strength, and the predecessors of the Lelands had exercised within it the amplest baronial sway: the moat which had once surrounded it could be distinctly traced, and vestiges of a draw-bridge and portcullis were yet visible at the principal entrance. Add to these circumstance, that the country around was retired, thickly

wooded, and almost without a neighbourhood; and the only associates of the youth, his mother, sister, preceptor, and their few domestics; and the growth of his earliest and strongest propensities will scarcely excite wonder. It must be recorded too, that the nearest town, that of L—— could boast an established *Circulating Library*, to which Mrs. Leland was a regular subscriber, and was as regular supplied with box-loads of its contaminating trash. The volumes thus periodically received, Augustus was allowed to peruse without prohibition or restraint, to the neglect of every serious employment, and in opposition to the repeated remonstrances of his accomplished and conscientious Tutor.

True it is, Mrs. L. had never the remotest intention of filling with hurtful and ungovernable notions the bosom of her darling son. She estimated romance-reading by her own experience of its effects; and could not be made to believe, that what was to her the mere amusement of a solitary hour, could possibly become the source of danger to any mind, however young, or however differently constituted. Faithful to this idea, she insisted that Leland's evidently increasing irritability of feeling, his restlessness, and seeming anxieties about he knew not what, were all the consequences of the dry lessons of Mr. Mason; and would constantly end her rather frequent harangues upon the subject, by asking

Augustus, if present, whether he had yet read ‘The Hermit of the Grot,’ ‘The Black Knight and the Demon,’ or ‘The Secrets of Kenelm Tower?’

It had long required the exertion of the Preceptor’s utmost prudence and address, to prevent an open rupture with the mother, while administering the instructions required of him to the son. Weary at length of this incessant contest with the maternal authority, and foreseeing the ruin of his pupil from the farther indulgence of his fatal habits, Mr. M. now resolved to obtain Mrs. Leland’s support of that system of instruction he had acquainted Augustus with his determination to enforce, or otherwise to give up his employ-

ment. For this purpose, he waited on Mrs. L. the following morning in the breakfast parlour, when the dialogue we here repeat took place between them.

After a few general observations upon indifferent subjects, and upon education, “I am sorry, Madam,” commenced the Tutor, “to inform you that Augustus disappoints me much, by the slow progress he makes in the studies likely to be most useful to him.”

“Bless me! Mr. Mason, why, my dear boy is accounted a prodigy by all who know him—that is, whenever he is in spirits to unbend from that pensive way of his, which I must own is not always becoming to him.”

“ He knows sufficient, Madam, to be able to *talk* upon many subjects which he does not really understand; and it would not surprise me to find that such a youth should have the dexterity to astonish the illiterate, at the very time that he must be pitied by the sagacious and well-informed.”

“ O! now I understand you, Sir. You would have the boy quite moped to death—as he partly is already—by learning Geometry, and Algebra, and Mechanics, and such low stuff. As to all which, I must however once more beg it to be understood, that I consider a sort of polite smattering amply sufficient for him.”

“ But, Mrs. Leland, a polite smattering in Mathematics, and the Sci-

ences, will not cure him of those defects of character, which a tolerable proficiency in those studies would have a powerful tendency to remove. And, Madam"—

“And, Sir, I do entreat that you will not addle the lad’s brains, nor damp his sweet sensibility, nor destroy his exquisite taste, by forcing him to pursuits that are not congenial to him. My boy has genius, sir; and the most charming talent for invention.”—

Mr. Mason shook his head.

“Nay,” resumed the lady, “it was but the other evening I caught him myself, in one of his musing fits, composing extempore, and reciting aloud—looking all the while at the

moon then over the ruined turret—a tale of a valorous knight, and a fair lady confined in the Gothic keep of an old castle, that would have done honour to the writer of the ‘Fay of the Rock’ herself. And, to speak plainly, Mr. Mason, I would not have this enchanting talent of his discouraged, for the sake of all the sciences your wisdom may be able to teach him.”

“Then, Madam, though most unwillingly I speak it, my duty compels me to apprise you, that, since I cannot submit to bear the responsibility for consequences which I predict, while you deprive me of the necessary power to obviate them, I must

decline the farther superintendence of your son's education."

"Sir! Mr. Mason! can you mean"—The lady was unable to proceed; for she was even more hurt than surprised at this unexpected declaration.

"Will you allow me, my dear, Mrs. Leland," said Mr. M., "to inquire whether you intend literally to follow his dying father's injunctions, in putting Augustus to some honourable trade?"

"That his father's oldest friend, that you, who have been a second father to him, should at last think of deserting us"—almost sobbed out Mrs. Leland.

"Pardon me, my good Madam.

Your serious answer to my question may prove the means to effect a removal of those obstacles, that otherwise must prevent my continuance with you."

"His father certainly desired it: and distressing as it is to reflect, that my boy in that case will be the first to disgrace his noble ancestry"—

"To disgrace!" repeated Mr. Mason.

"Yes, alas!" said Mrs. L., I fear the continued impoverishment of our estate—for you know, my friend, it *has* been impoverished by successive generations—must compel Augustus to find some means of retrieving our finances, or else that he will one day see an aged mother, and helpless

sister, surrounded by the bitterest evils of poverty and distress."

"Then, surely, my dear Madam"—

"But pray," interrupted Mrs. Leland, "do not inform the dear boy *as yet* that he is designed for trade: for, young as he is, he shews such a charming pride in his ancestors, and has such delicate feelings with regard to all the dirty interests of commerce, that it would certainly break his heart. Let us stay till he is a little older, Mr. Mason, and *then*"—

"And *then*—it may be too late. Let me once more conjure you, Mrs. Leland, to crush his destructive propensities in the bud. For, depend upon it, *corruption lies at the root of romance*: and the very same suscep-

tibility of disposition, which may at first lead to the love of the amiable and the good, the world will despise for its simplicity, ensnare through its openness, and finally prevert to the sensuality to which it is so easily seduced, unfortified as it generally is by humility or prudence, and but too commonly captivated by the first alluring vice presenting itself under the external form of virtue."

Mrs. Leland attempted, but in vain, to convince Mr. M. that no such disastrous consequences could possibly ensue in the case of a youth of so sweet, so amiable a disposition as her Augustus. The Tutor was immoveable; and, rather than part with a preceptor of such acknowledged

worth, and one who had besides evinced much affection for her son, the lady at last agreed, that, in the future conduct of his education, she would not interfere with Mr. Mason's plan; but would actually, if Mr. M. desired it, forbid the farther indulgence of the youth's rooted passion for romances.

CHAP. III.

THE next morning, when Mr. Mason required of Leland his customary task, once more was he pained to find (notwithstanding that the pupil contrived to conceal, as he imagined, a volume of the 'Black Banner,' on the entrance of his Tutor) that romance had either prevented or totally supplanted study. With a sternness in his countenance Leland had never before witnessed there, the justly offended preceptor, taking him by the hand, instantly led him to his chamber. "Remain there till your lesson is completed, sir," said Mr.

Mason, and immediately left him; at the same time securing the door on the outside.

Astonishment and confusion for a moment entirely overwhelmed Augustus; but rage quickly took the place of those emotions; for now, for the first time in his life, he beheld himself the subject of active coercion. He flew violently to the door; but, as it was composed of solid oak, and its lock of no ordinary strength, it resisted of course his most strenuous efforts to force it. Swelling with resentment, for a few minutes he paced the room with the strut of a monarch in tragedy: then again he assaulted the door; and again the antique oak repelled his puny efforts.

Words cannot paint his fury! At length, after once more traversing the room, and hurling, with a fierce look, his Euclid (author of his woes!) at the massy frame which held him prisoner, he sat down, thinking it might be possible to plan some method of escape.

But, for the means of effecting this—the window was two stories from the ground: and his apartment, however ancient, was unprovided with a trap-door, leading through mysterious passages to a subterraneous vault, or a sliding pannel, opening upon a concealed corridore, and conveying, by a winding staircase, to some secret outlet. In vain did he rack his brains for precedents of any

Rolando, Rinaldo, or Orlando, who had ever leapt from a casement at the height of near forty feet from terra firma; and the conviction was irresistibly forced upon him, that the most doughty hero of them all, who should have attempted so dangerous a feat, would, in all human probability, have broken either his legs or his neck.

Stung with the bitterest vexation, he sat some time pondering how to act. Suddenly casting his eyes towards a half-open closet, he perceived a stout and apparently long rope. *A rope-ladder!* he triumphantly exclaimed; and wondered that this so noted expedient in all cases of forlorn prisoners had not before occurred to

him. Eagerly did he lower it from the window, and found that it would nearly though not quite reach the lawn beneath.

Still, all this by no means corresponded with his ideas of a *rope-ladder*; and he was rather confused at perceiving the difficulties that would attend his descent by such a conveyance. However, he magnanimously secured one end of the rope to the bed-post, (no fastening of a more dignified nature presenting itself;) placed a chair by the window; mounted it; surveyed the distance to the bottom; twisted his hands in the rope; suspended one leg from his elevated situation; and—finding a sensation resembling a whirling of the brain

rapidly overcoming him—hastily drew it back again.

This circumstance had nearly over-set his glowing heroics: he calmly seated himself on the bed-side. But, soon reviving, all the horrors as he had learned to deem them, of immured solitude, recurred to his distempered imagination. He dwelt upon the triumph of defeating the plans of his *tyrant*, as in thought he called his too gentle Tutor: he pictured to himself the agitation and alarm that would pervade the castle upon the discovery of his absence, (for he had already determined to lurk within the neighbouring wood till night-fall;) and, full of the consequence he expected would for ever

attach to him, could he but summon resolution to achieve the enterprise, he once more ascended to the window; and (will it be believed?) his important vanity did then enable him, though trembling every joint, and pale as the midnight spectres he had so often read of, to descend, by successively untwisting and retwisting his fingers in the rope, and resting his feet upon every slight projection by the way, as far as the window immediately beneath his own. But this as he was dangling past, too much occupied with his own fears to notice who was standing within, a shriek struck like the knell of death upon his ear, and at the same moment he felt the rope descending with the

rapidity of lightning. Convinced that it had either broken or become unfastened above, he gave a shriek in concert, terror unloosed his hold, and he fell senseless to the ground.

Acute pain, for he had dislocated an ankle, recovered him just in time to witness his mother, tutor, sister, and the domestics of the household, rushing all together to the spot. “Augustus! child!” frantically exclaimed Mrs. Leland, “how could you think of so rash an attempt—he’s killed! he’s killed!” she cried in the utmost terror, seeing that he lay motionless, his face concealed in the high grass, upon the ground. “Be calm, I intreat you, Madam,” said Mr. Mason, lifting a hand of the terror-

stricken youth, and observing the burning blush that prevailed even over the hue of affright upon his cheek; "people do not often *die* of shame."—"But pray, sir, how did this happen?" he enquired of Augustus: "I do not recollect any problem in Euclid, elucidating the methods of perpendicular descent from a second-story window."

"I—no, sir—it's not in Euclid, but—that is—the rope broke"—stammered out the youth; so confounded by his mortification, pain, and terror, that he scarcely knew what he said. "The rope!" said Mr. Mason, affecting now for the first time to notice it, and discovering that it must be strongly secured above, since he tried

in vain to pull it from the window;
“the rope broke!”

“La! no, sir,” cried the servant-girl, who at this moment bustled into the circle, “the rope’s not broke: for as I happened to be in the next chamber, and heard a *monstratious* noise in young master’s room, I made bold to turn the lock, and there I *seed* the rope tied to the bed-post, and the bedstead pulled all the way from the *furder* corner of the room right up to the window!”

At this, Mr. Mason could not forbear smiling; the servants tittered; and little Emily laughed outright. “I did so scream,” she cried, “when I saw brother’s legs hanging, I couldn’t tell how, outside the win-

dow: yet I could hardly help laughing either, to see him clinging to the rope, just like our old tabby-cat!"

The titter among the servants here became a general roar, which Mrs. Leland silenced by a frown; but at the same time could not herself avoid saying, "silly, silly child!" During all this while, the little would-be hero had stirred neither hand or foot, nor uttered a syllable, as he lay; nor could his mother's most pressing intreaties prevail with him to attempt to rise. "Harkee, young gentleman," at length said Mr. Mason, "you are at liberty to prolong your folly to any extent you may think proper: it can hurt nobody but yourself. But, be-

fore we leave you, let me give you this little piece of advice. Should you ever again think of escaping from a two-pair of stairs window by means of a rope and a bed-post, remember that it was the increased *momentum* acquired by your body, when arrived at a certain depth, which had the effect of drawing the bedstead to the window after you: a principle in MECHANICS this, which, as you have more than once heard me explain it, might have prevented your causeless fright and fall, had romances permitted your paying me the attention necessary to enable you to recollect it."

So saying, Mr. Mason walked into the castle: and the servants having,

by his mother's orders, forced Leland upon his legs, the hurt he had received by the fall was then discovered. As he was unable to support himself, a sort of bier was constructed of the crossed arms of the domestics: and, with Mrs. Leland in tears, and an expression of grief mingled with comic wonder in the countenance of Emily, the little cavalcade followed slowly the steps of the Tutor. A surgeon being sent for, the ankle was set immediately upon his arrival: but Leland's recovery from the consequences of his *heroism*, cost him several day's confinement, not merely in his chamber, but in bed.

CHAP. IV.

THOUGH really concerned at the rather serious termination of Leland's exploit, Mr. Mason felt inclined to hope that the best effects might result from it. He communicated these hopes to Mrs. Leland; but that lady seemed rather disposed to reflect on the severity of the Tutor, as the cause of her son's disaster, than to allow that the disaster itself had any connection with the youth's turn for romance. A little conversation which she had the next day with Augustus, however, materially contributed to alter her sentiments in this respect.

Approaching his bedside to make her customary enquiries, she was at first pleased to observe that he answered with a degree almost of vivacity; for, since his accident, he had hitherto maintained a sullen silence, when she spoke, or made her, and indeed every one else, replies equally ungracious and ungrateful. The truth was, that during the hour previous to this visit, having had an interval of bodily ease, but finding it impossible to divert his thoughts from his recent disgrace, Leland had been working up his feelings to the highest pitch of exasperation, not with himself, for his own frantic absurdities, but with his Tutor, for that gentleman's attempts to cure him of them; and he

was now eager to give vent to all the reproaches on the worthy man, which the bitterness of his spirit inspired him with.

Mrs. Leland listened for some little time in astonishment, and scarcely without a smile, to the vehement exclamations of “brute!” “monster!” “barbarian!” with which he loaded his kind corrector. She then made some attempts to moderate the transports of his resentment: and even entered upon a sort of half-defence of Mr. Mason; though she had not the prudence entirely to conceal her chagrin at the Preceptor’s unexpected activity in the system of discipline he had commenced under her sanction.

“Consider, my dear child,” said

she, “that Mr. Mason certainly ought to have been obliged in the first instance, in regard to the lesson he set you. And really, I think, it would have been easier for you, with the abilities you possess, to have applied yourself seriously to it when he first locked you in, and thus have regained your liberty in a short time by completing it, than to have had recourse to such a very, very violent step as getting out of your window. You have surely great reason to be thankful that the consequences were no worse, as you must be sensible they might have been.

“I cannot much longer endure his tyranny,” said Augustus, who had paid but little attention to Mrs. Le-

land's remarks; "and you know, mother, if Osric, in the 'Abbey of St. Clair,' had not escaped from the cruelties of the monk Egbert, his preceptor, by means of the spiral stairs so happily discovered by him—cut, as you remember, in the interior of the immense walls of his prison—he would never have been able to achieve the deliverance of his beloved Elfrida, nor yet to obtain such noble vengeance on his other enemies, by the midnight burning of their strong-hold, the Castle of the Wizard's Glen."

"Is it possible, child!" cried Mrs. Leland, now first perceiving his practical application of her admired authors; "that you could seriously

set yourself to imitate *the nonsense that one reads in a book?*"

"Nonsense!" repeated Augustus, equally surprised in his turn; "nay mother, hav'nt you over and over again told me, that the whole story was *actually divine?*"

"Yes!" said his mother, as the real state of her son's mind now dawned upon her own; and, casting a sorrowful look upon the youth, she left the room to conceal her tears: for knowing no medium in her conclusions, she was now ready to believe, not merely that his imagination was infected, but that his reasoning powers were disturbed, by the fantastic visions of romance.

As for Leland, though, at a former period, the sentiments his mother had just advanced would have had their proper weight with him, yet now, so infatuated was he become, surprise at the seeming alteration in her opinions was quickly changed into a feeling of contempt:—yes, my young reader! pause while you reflect, that romance had, even at this early period, brought her victim to an unreserved indulgence in contempt for the admonitions of a parent!

CHAP. V.

ON Leland's complete recovery from the effects of his *un-romantic* accident, his mother, convinced but too late of the mischiefs to be apprehended from the farther cultivation of his darling propensities, began heartily to co-operate with Mr. Mason in his endeavours to work a thorough reformation. The Tutor was now even positively charged to omit no species of study, or restraint, that might conduce to this end; and Leland, for the first time, found no refuge from his tasks, or the infliction of them, in the arms of his mother.

Meantime, the youth's abstraction of manner increased daily: and his only solace became that of wandering, after he had finished his lessons, through the woods that surrounded the domain of his fathers, while in imagination he conjured up their spirits, to behold and redress his wrongs. In these rambles, he was speedily known and noticed by the peasants whose cottages were nearest to his home; and not a few of them would stare with astonishment, as they witnessed his heroic strut, his sudden starts and pauses, or his uplifted hands while solemnly invoking the manes of his progenitors.

Neither did this kind of observation altogether displease him: on the

contrary, it flattered his pride to observe their silent wonder as he passed. And it cannot excite surprise, that the pleasure he thus learned to take in this self-exhibition, soon added affectation to his other follies; though it might have gone nigh to cure him of that contemptible weakness, had he heard the loud laugh of the simple cottagers, that inevitably followed his departure.

When at home, the honest and unconcealed mirth of the little Emily, at his various extravagancies, not a little added to his discontent and disquiet: and every day his walks became longer and more frequent. Neither did Mr. Mason entirely discourage these perambulations, though

he took proper care that a romance should never be their companion; for he thought air and exercise necessary to his pupil, after the rather severe studies to which it was now thought expedient to subject him, in order to divert his mind from more baneful pursuits.

But in spite of this kind attention to the health of Augustus, he was observed to grow paler and more sickly, and his dejection of spirits to increase. These symptoms were viewed by Mr. Mason with real though concealed alarm; but by Mrs. Leland with such distress, that she had begun to repent her concurrence with the recently-adopted measures of the Preceptor, when a

new folly on the part of her son once more induced her to give them her entire approbation.

Leland was one day walking in the most unfrequented part of the woods, when, on turning an angle of the path, he suddenly observed, at the distance of a few paces, the rude and squalid tent of a family of gipsies; who, with a large iron kettle suspended over a wood-fire before them, appeared to be preparing themselves a repast. A man, rather advanced in years, was attending the kettle; while his son, a lad about Leland's own age, stood, with a vacant yet sly look, idly by; and a woman, with a child at her back, seemed to be gathering sticks a few yards farther on, to add

to the nearly exhausted embers on the turf.

Strange to tell, though Leland might be said to have *heard* of gipsies in the course of his life, he was totally unacquainted with their character as common pilferers from every neighbourhood visited by them, and their ordinary means of obtaining the necessities of life. In fact, he knew nothing, either of men or things, beyond the precincts of his mother's estate, and those exaggerated descriptions in his favourite authors, which alone had ever interested his imagination; for his unconquerable reserve had prevented those inquiries, as becoming as they are natural to youth, which would have proved

the sources of much valuable information.

As he approached, he could not help betraying in his countenance marks of surprise, mingled with alarm. Having never before seen any of this singular race, his romantic fancy instantly painted them as beings supernatural and unearthly: and it should be noticed, that though these wanderers had been some weeks resident in the vicinity, and had committed many thefts from the castle grounds, they had hitherto studiously avoided Augustus, whenever he had ignorantly approached them in his walks, judging him to be the young heir of the domain, and fearing that by his means they might be

discovered, and forced to migrate earlier than suited their intentions. But, having that morning accidentally met with a servant-girl of Mrs. Leland's, from whom, in return for foretelling her no small share of future splendour, they had obtained, along with a silver sixpence, some insight into the several characters of the family, they were resolved to accost our hero on his next appearance, and had scarcely matured a plan, of no good import to the youth, when he appeared to their wishes.

On seeing him, the man, though apparently inattentive to every thing but the kettle before him, gave a sort of cough, accompanied with a meaning look, (both unobserved by Au-

gustus,) which aroused the woman's attention. Yet she continued her occupation of gathering sticks, till Leland, having passed the man in silence, was immediately opposite to her; when, approaching him, she demanded in a mysterious manner, if she should tell his fortune?

Startled at the question, and struck with her wild appearance, which reminded him of the *Weird Sisters* he had read of in a Scottish romance, he stood a moment hesitatingly: then, with great sagacity, as he thought, and with an important voice, asked if she could describe the present; "for if so," continued he, "I may believe your prophecy of the future.—Who am I?"

“An heir, a prisoner, and a slave!” replied the woman, in a solemn tone. Leland was thunderstruck.

“But,” resumed the gipsey, taking his hand, and attentively examining it, “you will escape the tyrant. Be resolute; and this day will give you liberty.”

Astonished beyond measure, Augustus, after a pause, eagerly enquired her meaning?

“*We*,” returned the woman, glancing her eye at her seemingly inattentive husband, and the arch-looking youth at his side, “we want no castles, and read no books. We are happy: but you!”—

“I am indeed wretched!” said he, pathetically.

It need not surprise the reader, whom we spare the farther particulars of this extraordinary conversation, that its result was a determination on the part of Leland to accompany these gipsies, he scarce knew whither, and certainly he knew not why. But there was a something wild, singular, and, to say all in a word, *romantic*, about this adventure; and though he did not entirely credit the woman's pretensions to prophetic powers, he found it impossible to resist their fascination.

Before he could have time to repent of his resolution, the tent was struck, the moveables secured upon the back of an ass that had been browsing on thistles under the hedge,

and the party commenced their journey through the wood; the artful hag contriving to keep our hero in talk, while the man, who had not yet spoken a word, walked on gloomily before, and a settled leer was on the countenance of the urchin.

About sunset, a circuitous route having been purposely chosen by their leader, they reached the open country. The shades of evening began now rapidly to deepen: and that depression of the spirits, which, after an eventful day, sometimes seizes on the mind, infected by the gloom of twilight scenery, began to have a sensible effect upon Leland; whose animated apostrophes to liberty, and praises of pedestrian exertion, had

before gradually sunk into a profound silence.

The gipsey-woman now more than once advanced to the man in front, and addressed him in a few low words, to which he replied by indistinct mutterings: a feeling of dread stole fast upon the mind of our hero: the darkness was every moment increasing. He was just revolving in his mind the comforts of his snug, warm bed-chamber, and recoiling in horror from the thought of the miserable covert borne by the ass before him, when the man suddenly turned, and seized Leland by the coat; and, in spite of his shrieks and resistance, speedily divested him of that and his other garments; while

the woman stood as on the watch at a little distance, and the gipsey-boy looked on, and grinned and laughed outright alternately. During the performance of which atrocious act, the man's features, though they altered not for a moment from the composed and savage gloom they expressed habitually, appeared to our youth distorted with the malignant passions of a fiend, and conveyed an impression, which he judged would never be effaced from his memory. Having thus effected their purpose, some rags, which in fact formed a cast-off suit of the gipsey-boy's, were thrown to the horror-stricken Augustus; and the woman having by this time proceeded on her way to some distance,

the boy jumped upon the ass's back, the man seized hold of the bridle of the animal, giving the clothes just forcibly taken in charge to his son, and the whole party, favoured by the darkness, were out of sight in a few seconds of time.

What was the situation, and what the feelings, of Augustus! The consciousness that he had been duped, excited his rage; the conviction that to his own credulous folly his misfortune was chiefly to be attributed, filled him with shame and mortification; the darkness and loneliness of the strange spot at which he found himself, inspired him with terror; cold, nakedness, hunger, and bodily weariness, united to afflict him,

The anguish of his mind was betrayed by his loud and bitter lamentations, which none were near to compassionate, and the tears of distress and self-remorse fell plentifully from his cheeks.

Miserable as was his plight from the loss of his own garments, it was long before he could prevail with himself to assume those of the dirty gipsey-boy. But he at length found it absolutely necessary to protect in some degree his shivering limbs from the night-air; and the moon now rising, inspired him with the hope of being able to retrace his way to the Castle. He now clothed himself therefore with rags, which in the morning he would have spurned

from his path; and found them at least impart a feeling more agreeable than that of a total want of apparel.

Painfully did he begin his way toward the home, whose neighbourhood he had so causelessly quitted; and more and more doubtful did he become as he advanced, of his being again able to reach it. He with the utmost difficulty recognised the objects he had passed in the day-time, both from the different light, and the opposite position, in which they now appeared to him. His perplexity increased when he found it necessary to re-enter the woods; and his terrors were not slight as he passed under the dark arms of the lofty trees. The wood-cat, the fox, and the va-

rious lesser animals, which in our happy country are the only beasts that prowl nightly for their prey, were abroad; but the motions and voices of these were sufficient to give affright to one, whose habits had rendered him scarcely conscious that such animals existed. To add to his distress, he found it totally impossible to continue in the mazy path pursued by the unprincipled wanderers when escorting him in the contrary direction, and was obliged in consequence to guess at the track he ought now to follow. So intricate and deceptive were the few beaten ways under the trees, that, after toiling nearly two hours, forcing a passage through innumerable brakes,

that nearly tore from off him his remnants of clothes, and at last discovering an outlet, he became immediately sensible that he had not made the slightest real progress, having emerged from the wood at the distance of a few yards only from where, after leaving the gipsies, he had entered it!

This appeared the climax of his woes. Overcome with the fatigue of exertions so apparently fruitless, he threw himself upon a bank, and again gave vent to a torrent of tears. At that moment he could have relinquished all farther effort in despair; but then the alternative that presented itself, that of remaining all night upon the shelterless spot where

he now was, appeared so forlorn and comfortless, that he could by no means readily embrace it. At last he resolved, cost him what labour it might, to pursue the *boundary* of the wood, in the direction which he knew must conduct him towards the Castle, and not again intrust himself to its paths; and, regretting that this idea had not earlier occurred to him, he once more set forward.

In pursuing the resolution now formed, he was obliged to quit the road very shortly afterwards, and cross a stile into the fields that followed the irregular outline of the wood. As he proceeded, a path that had for some time accompanied him, terminated in a narrow lane, whose

direction, he was instantly conscious, was the reverse of that he ought to take. To continue along the margin of the trees, it became necessary therefore to clamber over a hedge, and surmount every other obstacle of the like nature that might occur on the way. Little as he was equal to such undertakings, after the fatigues he had already undergone, he felt it indispensable to his reaching home that night that he should attempt them; and, after some moments of hesitation, began to execute the task.

Had the wretched apparel that he could scarce keep together on his limbs been of the most opposite description, it must have suffered greatly from the wearer's putting its texture

to so severe a proof: what then very shortly became the state of that of Augustus? Long ere he reached an angle of the wood, from which he could faintly descry the castle-turrets standing in darkness beneath the waning moonlight, it was torn almost literally to ribbands; and became of course so accessible to the night air, that the youth doubtless owed it to the extraordinary bodily exertions he was making, that he did not afterwards fatally suffer from the cold. At length, when he was well nigh exhausted with his toils, and the night was nearly become the dawning of another day, the gates of the Castle stood before him; and the *heir*, in the garb of a beggar-boy, in

the cast-off tatters, now yet more tattered, of a gipsy-child, at an hour so unseasonable, was to demand admittance!

One only light was visible at any window of the abode, and that window looked from the chamber of his mother. It told Leland that a parent had been counting the hours, in little less than distraction no doubt, till his appearance. It aroused emotions in his bosom toward that fond parent, which not all the sufferings of his situation, not all the shame he felt at the recollection of the circumstances under which he must again appear before her, could deprive of their just tone of gratitude. Some portion of the *selfishness* of romantic

feeling had vanished, for a time at least, from the effect of the past day's adventures; and real affliction in his own person had made him more capable of valuing the anxiety of another on his account.

He knocked with a feeble and tremulous hand; but, in the stillness of the hour, the sound loudly reverberated in the Castle hall, and the casement of Mrs. Leland was instantly thrown open.

“Mother!” exclaimed Augustus, even before she could well appear at the window.

His mother, at the sound of his voice, waited not to convince herself by sight, but immediately flew down stairs to the portal.

But, when the strange and unlooked-for figure, rendered yet more wild by the sinking moonlight, under which her son now stood before her, met her eye, a shriek alone expressed her agitated feelings, and she fainted. The shriek, following the resounding knock of Augustus, betrayed the fact that one other person of the household had watched through the solitary hours, for now immediately appeared Mr. Mason; who, though scarcely less surprised, however more self-possessed, than Mrs. L., glanced only at the singular accoutrements of the youth, (following up that glance with an awful frown,) and then devoted himself solely to the lady's restoration. This, by the assistance of

some domestics, who shortly reached the scene, being effected, the Tutor took care that sufficient assurances of the safety of her son should be poured into her eager ears, but at the same time convinced her of the propriety of denying herself a farther sight of him till the return of daylight; having before sternly ordered Leland himself to his chamber.

CHAP. VI.

WE pass over the humiliating explanations into which it was necessary for Leland to enter, both to his mother and tutor, as soon as a long but disturbed sleep, still agitated with the events of the past day, had recruited his exhausted strength, and brought him to the re-possession of his faculties beneath the parental roof. These explanations were received with the utmost astonishment by Mrs. Leland, who could scarcely bring herself to think it possible that Augustus should have been guilty of such gross folly as he had now discovered in his

conduct; while Mr. Mason, without any such symptoms of surprise, questioned and cross-questioned the youth, in a manner to set the weakness and silliness of this grand exploit of his in its strongest light before him, hoping thereby to render him so heartily ashamed of himself, as to prevent the repetition of his extravagancies for the future. In doing this, however, Mr. M. unintentionally awakened again the pride and stubbornness native to his disposition; and half kindled new resolutions in his mind, the objects of which were, to shew some day that he could be wise as well as adventurous, and re-exhibit himself in some new feat, the daring and success of which should create the

wonder and admiration of all, while it confounded the sagacity of his Tutor. A disposition so insane, it was impossible that less than bitter experience should subdue; and accordingly we shall find that mortifications yet more severe than any he had hitherto suffered, were in reserve for Augustus.

Mrs. Leland took some pains to have the tatters in which her son had re-appeared at the Castle, conveyed away with so much secrecy as she judged would prevent the knowledge of what had transpired from spreading through the household. But, by some means, which never distinctly appeared, her precautions on this head were rendered unavailing; and

in a few days, Augustus could not help observing, the servants all met him with an half-suppressed smile, or tittered together in his presence. On more than one occasion, he even heard the words “gentleman gipsy-boy” exchanged between them; which sufficiently apprised him of their acquaintance with what had happened. Little Emily, meanwhile, who had been not a little curious concerning the causes of her brother’s absence, was not long in discovering the whole affair; and nothing could prevent her open laugh at the odd fancy, as she termed it, of Augustus, or withhold her arch enquiries respecting his *new acquaintances*, the gipsies.

Leland was not a little disturbed and indignant at all this: he began to shun the society of almost every one: his moodiness every day increased. At his daily lessons, Mr. Mason found him more and more listless and inattentive: he was also pained to observe, that he continued to grow paler and more sickly-looking. For this latter circumstance, indeed, he would have been able to account, had he been aware of a practice to which his pupil had latterly habituated himself.

For, finding no intervals of leisure for romance-reading during the day, Leland had at last come to the resolution, as it were in spite of his best friends, to devote a portion of the

night-hours to the continuance of this baneful pursuit. And often, when all else in the Castle were wrapped in sleep, had he devoured in secret the forbidden volumes; and when he at last sought his repose, it was to pass the remaining hours till morning in a succession of feverish dreams, and then to rise with haggard looks, and with a mind totally indisposed for every species of study. But the discovery of his wilfulness in this respect also was now to take place, and to bring with it his embarking in a new folly.

One night, just before the hour of twelve, when he had been reading the adventures of some hero, or heroine, who had accidentally become

the inmate of a ruined castle, which was in fact no other than the lurking-place of banditti, his imagination was exalted to a more than ordinary pitch by the description before him. The scene presented to his mind was a bedchamber, in which the chief personage of the tale was represented as sitting reading by night; when, on a sudden, the bed-clothes are seen to have a tremulous motion, and a dark figure stands unexpectedly behind the chair of the reader. Leland could not avoid turning an eye to his own bed-clothes, when his excited fancy pictured them as shaking at that very moment. He started from his chair; and in the instant of doing so, actually himself saw a figure close behind

him. It was that of Mr. Mason: but the faculties of the youth were too terrified and bewildered to allow of his perceiving this; and he directly fell motionless to the floor.

Circumstances had at length led the Tutor to suspect the nocturnal occupation of his pupil. On this night, he had resolved to satisfy himself of the truth of these suspicions; and, owing to the deep interest taken by Augustus in the wonders of the romance, was enabled to enter his chamber with such stillness as to be unperceived by him until the moment described. He now used his utmost efforts to restore the youth, at once convinced of the justice of his suspicions, and shocked at perceiving how

baneful still were the effects of the species of reading he had so often and strongly condemned. The well-known voice of his Preceptor soon brought Augustus to himself; but shame and resentment at the idea of having been betrayed into an exhibition of romantic terror, in the presence of the very person from whom he would most have wished to conceal any weakness of that nature, rendered him still obstinately silent. Mr. Mason saw that it would be to no purpose to attempt converting what had happened to his good, at least at the present moment; and staying only to see him in bed, and the light extinguished, he returned to his own chamber.

In the Tutor's looks, as Leland slowly recovered possession of his faculties, the latter had discovered more of pity than of anger. But this only rendered more bitter the reflections of the youth upon his bed: for what is so mortifying as *pity*, to those who are resolved upon acquiring *admiration*? Mr. Mason had seen him overcome even to fainting by fantastic terrors; yes, he had seen this, who had so often laid it down that such were the consequences of indulging in the visions of romance, and whom Leland was so bent upon convincing that, in his case at least, no such consequences could possibly follow. Stung beyond measure by this thought, repose left the couch of

Augustus: the first faint light of morning began to appear, and still sleep had not visited his eyelids. The hour, he felt, would now speedily arrive, at which he must again meet the eye of his preceptor; must encounter his look of *pitying* superiority, and, as he doubted not, receive the punishment so justly due for disobedience to his, and his mother's commands. The thought suddenly glanced upon his mind—*need* he encounter all this? That thought was succeeded by as sudden a determination that he *would not*. “Why not,” thought he within himself, “at this moment put in practice the resolution I had already formed, of one day seeing the world for my-

self, and perhaps never returning to that home where I meet with such continual mortifications?"—The idea thus rashly started, was followed up by its yet more rash execution: the morning dawned upon the Castle towers, and Leland was no longer an inmate beneath them.

CHAP. VII.

THE mists of early morning floated in a thick white mass over the deep valley, through which ran the tranquil Wye, and whose heights on one side were crowned with the Castle of his ancestors, as Leland departed from the spot which from his infancy he had called his home. Avoiding the woods, he took the bye-track which he knew intersected the road leading to the town of L——; where he again met with and crossed the Wye; and, proceeding rapidly on his way, had passed the boundary line which separated his native Herefordshire

from Shropshire, before the hour at which his absence from the breakfast-table gave the first notice to his mother and tutor of his abrupt departure. What were the feelings of these his natural protectors and friends, and of the other inhabitants of his paternal roof, upon the occasion, must be left to the reader to imagine: we must at present content ourselves with describing those only which filled the bosom of Augustus.

He reached the town of Ludlow just as the sun, gaining some height over the horizon, began to render the heat oppressive, and made rest extremely desirable to our young traveller. His frequent habits of pedestrianising had rendered him pretty

equal to the exertions he had already made; but now, thinking the danger of pursuit to be past, he resolved to allow himself a respite. He therefore walked into a house of entertainment, which hung out its friendly sign at the entrance of the town, and inquired if he could be accommodated with breakfast.

The hostess, surprised perhaps at the question at an hour of the day which in that part of the country is thought late for that repast, and still more struck, it might be, with the youthful appearance and way-worn looks of the enquirer, hesitated before she answered—yes: but then, thinking curiosity on the subjects that arose to her mind no part of

her business, troubled herself no farther than to prepare the meal required.—It may here be necessary to inform the reader, that Leland was not unprovided with that essential to every species of travelling, money: for his mother had always been more bountiful to him in this respect than was properly consistent with her limited means; and, as he had been almost entirely without the means of spending what she gave in his own neighbourhood, his purse had become tolerably weighty. His perambulation with the gipsies had sufficiently instructed him that he must not expect to find the world disinterested; and as he had entertained confused resolutions of engaging in

the enterprise he was now pursuing, from the hour of Mr. Mason's conversation with him upon that unfortunate adventure, he had, contrary to his natural disposition, become a hoarder of every shilling of his pocket-allowances. But what was thus carefully heaped together, he was now prepared to employ as profusely: and accordingly he astonished the landlady by his liberality in discharging the cost of his breakfast.

Willing to retain so good a customer, she began by questioning him as to the road he was going; a question to which Leland was puzzled to reply, for this was a point on which at present he had not once reflected. In fact, of the name of the town

where he now was he was ignorant; and it was perfectly at random that he answered he was travelling to Shrewsbury. “Shrewsbury!” repeated the hostess; “then, my dear young sir, you had better rest yourself here till after dinner; and by that time the Shrewsbury coach will pass through the town, and you can ride all the rest of the way like a young gentleman as you seem.”

But Leland replied, that he preferred walking; at which the good lady stared, and muttered her wonder that young heads should be so saving. To convince her that she was mistaken in the motive of his choice, he now began to expatiate on the advantages of pedestrian exercise; and as-

sured her that in every possible point of view it was preferable to every species of artificial conveyance. But against this opinion she protested strongly, and actually appeared not very clearly to understand the arguments he entered into in support of it. The matter ended in the youth's repeating his resolution to proceed in the manner he arrived, and almost immediately, with an exulting air, putting that resolution in practice. Animated by rest, and his invigorating meal, he set forward with new life, and no small appearance of importance in his steps and gestures. Few who now saw him would have imagined him to be the *hero*, who but the night before fainted at his own fears, and conjured

up a spectre in the person of his preceptor: few also would have supposed that he had passed the preceding night without repose; and he himself began to exclaim against sleep as affording nought “to charm the wise.”

But the increasing heat of the day, and the effect of his exertions before breakfast, combined very quickly to alter his sentiments in this respect. He had not now travelled many miles, before he was completely overcome by exhaustion; and his first object became to find a retired and shady spot, on which to recline until the coming-up of the stage, any idea of assistance from which he had not long before held in such contempt. Such a spot he found, beneath some

lofty elms that skirted a little copse by the road-side; and scarcely had he here thrown himself upon a grassy bank, ere he fell into the most profound repose. How long exactly he lay in this situation, he knew not; but, on awaking, he saw clearly, by the position of the sun in the sky, that the noon was past, and that evening would ere long be fast approaching. The Shrewsbury coach, doubtless, then, had gone by while he slept; and he would be necessitated to reach that town in the best manner he could (and that if possible before nightfall) or else to return to Ludlow. The latter he could not persuade himself to think of, and he therefore resumed his route.

With his best efforts, the night fell; and still was he far distant from Shrewsbury. The increasing darkness speedily possessed his mind with a gloom congenial to itself; and his weariness returning, and his feet becoming sore with toils to which they were so little accustomed, increased his distress. At length he once more seated himself by the roadside, musing upon the circumstances in which he found himself, and half wondering why he had left the home, beneath whose roof he would again now have been gladly placed. As these thoughts arose, a stage passed rapidly along in the direction he was to pursue; but though he called loudly to the coachman to be taken

up, it whirled by without regarding him. In fact, it was carrying its full number of passengers, and though it's driver heard Leland's call, he would not trouble himself to regard it. This new disappointment worked upon his feelings greatly; he could not refrain from many bitter tears, while inwardly he condemned his extreme rashness and folly.

The moon now appeared rising over the trees, and gave him the satisfaction of assuring himself of a pleasing light upon the remainder of his way. At length he came in sight of that very considerable and most pleasingly-situated town of Shrewsbury; approaching it by a handsome bridge over the river Severn. The

houses appeared to extend and lift themselves majestically along the opposite bank, receiving a flood of moonlight on their numerous roofs, while the fronts and gable-ends of many formed masses of the deepest shade, and the spires of the different churches rose like burnished silver over them. The pleasant meadows skirting the deep valley whose bottom was the river's bed, composed a picture of the softest repose, and as Leland looked upon them from the bridge, imbued his mind with a melancholy that melted him again to tears.

The hour was nearly arrived, at which on the night preceding he had been so strikingly the victim to his

own fantastic terrors; he now reflected upon all the circumstances of that hour with the most poignant mortification and regret. All the inferior inns of the town being closed, and the profoundest stillness reigning in the streets, he began to entertain fears that he should be unable to find a lodging for the night: but at length he saw lights burning in the long entrance-passage of a principal travellers' house and hotel, and one or two waiters in motion at the upper end of it. He advanced, and addressing one of them, desired to be provided with a bed: the man eyed him from top to toe, seeming particularly to notice his dusty and pilgrim-like appearance, and then

coldly asked if he could pay for it. To this Leland replied by shewing the contents of his purse; and the waiter, needing no more, took from it half a crown, and then consigned the young traveller to the care of a chambermaid. This latter, more curious than the male domestic, plied him hard with questions as she performed her office; only naturally taking such a liberty with one so young, alone, and travelling so late on foot for no imaginable purpose: but the native reserve of Augustus greatly aided him in his brief and not very gracious answers, and the girl gave up her point with the conviction only that he was an obstinate runaway. Being left to a strange bed, to solitude, and

darkness, his spirits were again overcome by the novelty of his situation; and, but for shame, he would with little difficulty have come to the resolution of setting forward for the Castle again with the morning light. Nay, he once nearly determined upon this step: but at last, worn out with fatigue, and the harassing effect of his own thoughts, he sunk to sleep, with the resolve of leaving the future to his feelings in the morning.

CHAP. VIII.

THE morning came; and Leland rose to look upon gay scenes, and a bright sky, inspiring day-dreams, that at once dissipated all thoughts of returning. By the now ready officiousness of the same waiter, who but the night before had received him so ungraciously, his apparel was brought him in the neatest trim, and he was politely desired to walk down stairs to the coffee room, and there give his orders for breakfast. All this was highly flattering to one, to whom the interior of an inn was so new: he began to think that he had never

before known what it was to be happy, and that the supremest felicity was to be found in a house of entertainment for travellers. Neither was a sumptuous breakfast unacceptable to him who had tasted nothing since the late breakfast of the preceding day; although sleep had in a great measure supplied the want of food, and indeed anxiety had rendered him forgetful of it. He now took his coffee, toast, and eggs, and perused the London paper with the air of *forty* at least, and had never in his life before felt himself a personage of so much consequence.

Instructed by the events of the past day, he did not fail to enquire at what hour the next stage would pass

for Wales, which, as he was now so near that country, he had, while at breakfast, resolved to visit. As the state of his feet still reminded him of his late extraordinary pedestrianism, he was rather mortified to hear that no conveyance would go through the town in that direction during the day, although one had passed early in the morning. This information determined him, after a little reflection, to continue at Shrewsbury till next morning, at an early hour of which, he was told, the coach to Holyhead would start from the inn-yard, and arrive at the last-mentioned place late in the evening. By availing himself of this conveyance, his geographical knowledge apprised him that

he would have an opportunity of crossing the mountainous and romantic region of North Wales in a single day, and the top of the coach, he doubted not, would afford him every facility for surveying its beauties. Accordingly, he spent the greater part of this day in examining whatever was worthy observation in the town; took a walk by the river-side, and along the beautiful meadows he had seen the night previous; and as, to do him justice, he had a pure taste for the enjoyment of the antique memorials of former days, derived much satisfaction from a visit to the fine old church of St. Mary's, &c.

With all his high-flown feelings on the subject of money, he was a little

struck at the amount of the bill brought him by his first acquaintance at this stylish inn, the smirking waiter. This he was required to settle the night previous to his departure, agreeably to established custom in the cases of travellers who are to leave at unseasonable early hours on the following day. He did so; having before paid half the cost of his intended journey; by both which disbursements he found his purse so much reduced, that he began to discover how unequal had been his fund at first to the expence of *seeing the world*; and that, rich as he had imagined himself, it might probably be his most prudent step, as soon as he arrived at Holyhead, to

endeavour as quickly as possible to get back again.

Day-light scarcely had once more dawned, when he was summoned to mount the vehicle destined to convey him, and the several passengers besides, ere they reposed again, to the farthest boundary of North Wales. Leland procured a seat in front, and this being the first time he had been so seated on the roof of a coach, felt an uncommonly elated sensation as he saw the wheels revolving rapidly beneath him, and the breezes of the morning, and the rich country through which he passed, united to give animation to his spirits. The peculiar neatness of the cottagers' gardens in this part of England, and

the universal richness of their produce, was what chiefly excited his attention during the first twenty miles of the ride. Soon after, he was informed that he was on the point of entering Wales; and though, upon this news, he prepared himself for a succession of grand and striking scenes, it is no more than the truth to say, that the reality rather surpassed than fell beneath his expectations.

The principality was entered by a bridge over the little river which flows through the vale of Chirk. The approach to this vale was picturesque; and Augustus observed an aqueduct on the left hand, which added to the interest of the view. Beyond Chirk, he saw the curious old castle of that

name; whose numerous modern windows did not appear to him to be greatly in character with the massy solidity of the ancient building. Presently, in an opposite direction, appeared the handsome abode of a celebrated hospitable Welsh Baronet; and, directly after, at an abrupt turn of the road, was opened the first view of the lovely vale of Llangollen. The beauty and extent of this rich vale immediately captivated the eyes of our young traveller, who justly thought that never in his life before had he witnessed so enchanting a scene. In the foreground was a canal, and at some little distance its aqueduct, consisting of handsome stone piers, and iron balustrades for the convenience of the

passengers. The river Dee, rippling over its rocky bed, and occasionally dashing and foaming over the obstructions and shallows it encountered on its way, formed a striking contrast with the regular smoothness of the artificial stream. All around were pastures, and richly cultivated grounds, interspersed with luxuriant trees, and closed in the distance by blue mountains.

As the vehicle proceeded, the views, perpetually varying, presented sometimes a ruined castle, crowning a lofty eminence; sometimes numerous little cascades, rushing and tumbling down the steeps into the river; sometimes on one side a wild precipitous waste, and on the other a

fine champagne country, clothed with softness and beauty. The very cottages had a picturesque look, being universally of limestone, roofed with blue slate. The first little Welsh town, however, which the travellers reached, and at which they breakfasted, had but a dingy aspect; but to Augustus, its dulness and dirt were compensated by the presence of a native harper at the inn, whose notes brought back the scenes of many a romance to his imagination, though all around him was most provokingly unromantic, as he could not help inwardly acknowledging.

Beyond the little town, the obstructions in the river increasing both in number and size, the Dee became

more foamy and tumultuous, and more beautiful in its seeming anger. The scenery still consisted of mountains, cataracts, eminences clothed with weeping birches and larches up their sides, and black with heath or tall pines at their tops, pastures, and long vales enriched with crops of ripe corn. This lasted till the coach reached Corwen, a little beyond which town the Dee turned its course from that of the travellers, but the river Elwy soon compensated for its absence.

Picturesque bridges thrown over the latter stream continually presented themselves, and one had the accompaniments, a most romantic glen and waterfall. Augustus was

now entertained with the sight of several cottages, to the walls of which were suspended rude resemblances of loaves cut out in stone, signifying, as the coachman informed him, that *white* bread was there to be sold to the luxurious who could pay for it, *barley* bread being that in common use. The next peculiarity that struck him, was some straggling *wild* horses at a distance, many of which, he was told, roamed at large in the more mountainous parts.

The three peaks of the highest mountain in Wales, Snowdon, were soon seen, though as yet at a great distance. The river Conway was crossed, and the road afterwards wound by its side, presenting fre-

quent views of large masses of rock, shaped by the channel into grotesque forms, that were lying in its bed. Occasional bursts of the snowy tops of mountains were next visible, and continued to occur throughout the route; and the travellers were soon completely encompassed with these grand creations of nature. On every side were now precipitous heights, and immense masses of overhanging stone, deep glens, and roaring cascades, while the road ran along the gloomy vallies, or was fearfully cut half way up the sides of the eminences. Amidst such a profusion of scenes so *truly* romantic, Leland was entirely overpowered by the feelings they are so calculated to excite; feel-

ings, in such situations naturally, and therefore justly indulged, and which are only dangerous, or blameworthy, when produced by artificial stimulants, and applied to times and occasions that make them appear affected, if not ridiculous.

Such, for a succession of miles which we must leave undescribed, did Leland find the scenery of North-Wales. At length, the travellers arrived at Bangor, where dinner was prepared for them. At this meal, various questions were put to him by the other travellers, all of whom were surprised at being accompanied on their journey by so mere a youth, alone, and unprotected by a relative or friend. These questions put him

to infinite pain; as the truth, he felt, was not to be told; and he was too little versed in deceit to be able to invent answers that were at all satisfactory. It was greatly to his relief, that all were at last summoned to proceed: they then quickly reached Bangor Ferry, where both passengers and luggage were consigned to a large ferry-boat, and in ten minutes landed in the island of Anglesea. The approach of evening soon after, prevented the aspect of the country, upon the renewal of their journey, from being observed; and the night had completely closed in before the arrival at Holyhead.

Both from weariness and the desire to avoid farther questioning from his

companions on the road, Leland was no sooner safely bestowed at the inn, and had discharged the remainder of the demand upon him for his conveyance, than he desired to be shewn to his chamber. The thoughts that visited him upon his pillow were not of the most agreeable nature. He began to reflect with a feeling of dread upon his distance from home; and, after the various claims upon his purse that had been made during the day, its reduced state inspired him with some anxiety about the means of returning thither. But, ever ready with some wild scheme for extricating himself from his difficulties, the idea of repassing on foot the sublime and beautiful scenes

he had so much admired during the day, and of deriving new pleasure from a closer inspection and contemplation of them, no sooner presented itself, than the plan was determined on. In his eagerness to embrace this undertaking, he never calculated upon the number of days that it would occupy to perform in this manner the distance he had accomplished by the stage coach in the course of but one. Neither did the wisdom of proceeding just so far as Holyhead, he knew not why, in order to return again for as good a reason, immediately occur to him: but, full of his new project, he sunk to sleep, and rose with an unaltered resolution pretty early the next morning.

CHAP. IX.

THE daylight view from his window presented to Leland a new scene, that of a part of the Irish Sea, with various vessels sailing upon it. Delighted with so novel a prospect, which he had somehow forgotten would be exhibited at a little coast and port town, he directly made the best of his way to the pier, where one of the Dublin packets was at that moment preparing to sail. He saw nearly all those with whom he had travelled the preceding day, stepping from the pier to the vessel, and re-stepping from the vessel to the pier; and, ignorant

that they were intended passengers to Ireland, and that the bustle he saw around arose from the preparations for the voyage, he ventured to imitate their example. After several times traversing the deck, and returning, and again stepping on ship-board and examining the sails, the mast, cordage, &c. a new field for observation appeared to him through the hatchway, down the cabin-stairs; and, with the presumption we have remarked in his character, he directly went below. The variety and completeness of the accommodations, the curious construction of the bedsteads, formed like cup-boards one over another, and running along each side of the vessel, here excited his admira-

tion. He surveyed every part most attentively, and after remaining below stairs a considerable time, was beginning to think how fortunate he was in enjoying an opportunity to see such sights, when he suddenly perceived an inclination of the floor of the packet, as if it were lying very much on one side. He was going to express his surprise at this appearance to those around him, when as suddenly the inclination of the vessel was altered, and it clearly lay upon its other side. He gave an exclamation of affright, at which all near him laughed; and, supposing therefore that he should derive no solution from them of the cause of his alarms, he hastily made his way up the stairs.

What were then his confusion and dismay, when he perceived the ocean all around, and the shore, and little town of Holyhead, apparently flying fast away from the vessel! In fact, the packet had set sail while he was so much occupied below, and all there were too much intent upon their own concerns to notice him, or to suppose otherwise than that he was a passenger like themselves. The Steward, the only person who had particularly observed him on board, having also noticed his arrival by the coach the preceding evening, in company with those with whom he was still surrounded, very naturally conceived him to belong to one of the families going to Dublin; and none of the pas-

sengers themselves were surprised at seeing him among them, if they observed him at all, as they either entertained the same idea as the Steward, or else, having travelled with him the preceding day, they could feel no wonder at his continuing their companion, since few indeed travel to Holyhead with any other purpose than that of crossing the Irish Channel.

His first cry when on deck was, "Stop the ship! stop the ship!"—which sounded so ridiculously to all acquainted with the nature of a sea-voyage, that every one in hearing, burst into a fit of laughter. At this, he gave way to a flood of mingled passion and tears; which exciting the

pity of some, and the attention of all, the Captain among others, approached, and enquired into the cause of his grief. In broken sentences, Leland made him sensible that he was surprised into his present situation, and of his earnest desire to return to Holyhead. "It is impossible," was the Captain's only reply to this latter application; and he then proceeded to enquire into the causes of our youth's singular predicament, what was his name, where resided his friends, how he happened to be in a strange place alone, &c.

These questions were put in the presence of all on board, every one having crowded round to hear the

explanation of so strange an occurrence. How abashed, how utterly mortified and confounded, was Augustus! The same confession of the truth that he had so studiously avoided in his intercourse with his stage-coach companions, was now wrung from him in the presence of a large audience by surprise, terror, and distress, uniting to render him incapable at the moment of farther concealment. In fact, he acknowledged, in reply to the Captain's enquiries, his name to be Augustus Leland; that he lived at —— Castle in Herefordshire; that he had left his home without cause or occasion; that he had no wish whatever to proceed to Dublin; that he was fearful

his remaining cash would scarce suffice for his return, &c.

How pitiful did he appear in his own eyes, and those of his auditors, while making his acknowledgments! How bitter was his mortification at perceiving a smile at least upon the countenance of all, at hearing an unrestrained laugh from several! The Captain alone looked grave, nay severe, and indignant: he surveyed Leland with eyes of piercing and stern import; informed him that he knew his mother, that he would detain him on shipboard till he had written to and obtained an answer from her respecting his future disposal; and that he had no doubt of obtaining her consent to his sending

him a sea-voyage as cabin-boy to a friend of his who was commander of a sloop then going on a cruise; adding, that he thought this would prove an excellent punishment for him, and no doubt cure his disposition for roving in future.

At hearing all this, Leland at last fell on his knees, wrung his hands, sobbed, and intreated the Captain to *turn the ship round*, and take him back to the pier at Holyhead. The laugh was renewed at this; while the Captain, not without a seaman's oath, exclaimed, "What! alter the packet's course? No, not for fifty run-aways. Nay, if I had five hundred such on board, I should put them all into the hold till we got to Dublin, just as I am going to serve you."

Leland sprang upon his feet, and looked with terror and anxiety into the Captain's face, for an explanation of his meaning. This he soon discovered. "Morris," cried the Captain to one of the men, "clap this youngster down below, and shut down the hatches." The man approached to execute the order; which drew from Augustus a fresh burst of anguish and dismay. Some of the passengers now interposed, supposing it was really intended to put in force what was threatened; but it was the wish only of Leland's present kind corrector to create a strong impression, and in this he fully succeeded. Without appearing to notice what fell from those around him, he went on, "a storm seems to be brewing;" and

he here looked at the slightly clouded, though serene summer sky; "and if we should happen all to go to the bottom, little runaway will go first, that's all."

The idea of a storm at sea, while he was shut up in the dark in a ship's hold, was now present to the mind of Augustus. Who shall describe what he felt at this moment! At length, the Captain seemed to be prevailed upon by the earnest intreaties of the passengers, to allow of our youth's remaining upon deck. "However, my lad," said he, "if the storm *should* come, depend upon it I shall make a clear deck, and throw you over board along with the rest of the lumber."

As Leland now sobbing took a seat

at one side of the vessel, never in his life before had fair weather appeared to him so desirable. Shame and grief both led him to hide his face with his hands as he leant against the railing which ran round the deck's edge; but while in this situation, he could not avoid now and then upturning an eye to the heavens, to see if they grew darker, to the no small amusement of all who thought it worth their while to observe him. Some young men in particular, for diversion's sake, seated themselves near him, and with grave countenances affected to perceive with much alarm the increasing signs of an approaching tempest. Others, with as much apparent seriousness, expressed their wish that it had never been their lot

to enter the same ship with a runaway; as though they feared that the storm predicted was about to visit all on his account. In the proper possession of his faculties, Augustus might have been able in some measure to see the drift of what was passing; but the novelty of his present fears caused them so entirely to get the better of his judgment, that every thing he heard, appeared stamped with the utmost appalling reality. What would he now have given, to have been once more safe at home in the Castle! How merely nothing, in comparison with his present troubles, appeared to him the most difficult tasks, the severest discipline, imposed by Mr. Mason!

All apprehensions of a storm were

soon afterwards dissipated by the Captain's expressing his much more real fears of a *calm*. And in fact the light and rather contrary airs with which the vessel had started, and which from the first had rendered it necessary to *tack* frequently, (thereby occasioning the change of the packet's side to the water that had excited Leland's alarms) were sinking gradually away; and in a short time all was breathless stillness around. The sails hung motionless in the rigging, the ship lay like a dull log upon the surface of the sea, and not a ripple disturbed the universal smoothness of the vast expanse of waters. The very crew and passengers seemed as though infected with the profound silence that was reign-

ing, for only here and there were heard a few low words among them. Meanwhile, the ocean received a dark gloomy look from the colouring of the sky, for there was that general cloudiness in the face of the heavens, which sometimes accompanies a day of extraordinary closeness and heat, and the present was a day of that description.

This aspect of things was almost as frightful to Leland, as would have been the storm, the mention of which had so greatly aroused his terrors. He looked around him, and could see nothing but one dark wide waste of ocean, for the coast of Wales had entirely disappeared, and no other land was in sight. The idea of such a situation was both oppressive and

fearful to one who had never before seen either the ocean or a ship, who had been nursed in banefully luxurious seclusion, and whose mind had not been reared to vigour or firmness by any acquaintance with the actual world. The sky and the sea were the only objects presented to his timid and astonished gaze; he looked again and again around, and still nothing in any quarter was apparent but the sea and sky.

When the packet had lain in the manner described during the space of half an hour, a gentle swell began to be perceivable in the water, and the vessel was as gently agitated. The swell increased, and the motion of it's burden increased with it. Shortly, the rising of the surface

became a perfect roll, of the kind so frequently accompanying a sea-calm, and our ship rolled tumultuously in concord. The effects of the motion upon all the fresh-water sailors were soon sufficiently visible, and not less so in the case of Leland than of the rest. He was quickly overcome, with others, by the dreadful sensations of sea-sickness, retched violently, and was completely the subject of those feelings, under the influence of which people are willing, according to the common expression, to give their lives for a straw.

The swell and the calm, to the no little mortification of all, lasted until sunset; the hours thus occupied affording Augustus ample leisure for reflection and bitter repentance.

Having been blest with a constitution more than commonly free from the attacks of indisposition, he remembered not a day's previous illness in his life; but illness the most distressing to the feelings had now overtaken him. The sun at length, just ere his departure, burst from the mantle of clouds in which he had been enveloped during the day, and shed a stream of parting radiance over the ocean, as he appeared on the point of quenching his lustre in its waters: but the glories of such a scene afforded no consolation even to the *romantic* temper of Augustus. He was infinitely more satisfied to remark that the rolling motion of the vessel decreased, as a brisk air again began to wing it to the place of its

destination; and became still more comforted, as the shades of evening drew on, through the contemplation of the snug sleeping accommodations below, in one of which he did not dream of a refusal to his reposing till morning.

Impressed with the certainty of this enjoyment, no sooner did the veil of confirmed night appear to be dawning round, and the coolness of the air to give additional evidences of its approach, than he resolved to proceed to the cabin. On rising, he found it next to impossible to keep his legs upon the deck, both from their having become cramped by so long a confinement to a particular spot, and from the now pretty steep inclination of the vessel to one side. He seemed

also to feel worse from the effects of his own motion, and from all the causes mentioned, found it a little difficult most slowly to walk down those stairs he had descended with such ease and vivacity in the morning.

He was proceeding, as soon as he reached the cabin-floor, to take possession of the first sleeping nook that presented itself, when a rough arm, and angry voice, arrested him with, "Stop, sir! that's my birth!" Attempting to make himself master of the next, he was accosted in a very similar manner; and in fact found that every bed on board was thus engaged, the packet on this occasion carrying a more than usual number of passengers. Travellers, even of the most generous dispositions, are apt to

acquire a taint of selfishness upon an unpleasant voyage, or a long journey; and Leland, though doubtless in the situations of those around him, he would have imbibed precisely their feelings, thought himself thrown into the society of a set of the most unromantically interested and unsympathising mortals that it could have fallen to his lot to encounter. The extreme of mortification was painted on his countenance; but if any body regarded it, it was without any expression of pity, and in some instances with a laugh. He was at last advised to stretch himself upon the floor for the night, as he was assured several would do who were in his predicament.

Rather than resort to this alternative, he resolved, since the heat and

closeness of the cabin renewed his most distressing sensations, to take his station again on the deck. He was returning therefore, when the Captain, meeting him on the stairs, in a tone of thunder asked him what business he had to go below; adding, that the deck was quite good enough for a runaway, who might have been at home and warm in his bed but for his own folly. Sunk to despair by the manner of the Captain, and humiliated to the dust by the bitter justice of his remark, Leland took his former seat, and hung over the vessel's side in an agony of remorse and affliction. The wind increased with the increasing darkness; a new tack brought the packet's side at which our youth was stationed almost to

the water's edge; he recoiled with horror as the dark roaring waves, tipped with white foam, seemed to rush by with tumultuous eagerness in the direction contrary to that the ship was pursuing—he felt, that to look upon them for an instant, would subject him to the danger of tumbling into the abyss he was surveying. In his terror, he *crawled* up the deck to its opposite side, which was lifted in air in proportion as that he quitted was plunged into the waters. He then continued lying upon the bare deck, feeling in himself neither life nor spirits to attempt retaking a seat.

To add to his afflictions, rain soon began to descend from the heavens, threatening in the space of a few seconds to wet to the skin a traveller

totally unprovided with great coat, and all other travelling accommodations. The Captain, without seeming to take notice of his forlorn condition, now gave private orders to one of the men to furnish him with a stout sail-cloth; and a passenger also, at the same gentleman's secret suggestion, soon after provided him with an umbrella. Tears of gratitude started into his eyes, in return for these services; for he had just before considered himself as abandoned by all, and perceived no prospect before him but that of lying exposed to the "pelting of the pitiless storm" till the morning. But for the assistance of these articles, indeed, he would have suffered not less from the ocean than the sky; for, owing to the

still rising strength of the wind, and proportionate boisterousness of the waters, the salt spray was continually beating over the bow and sides of the packet, and would alone have sufficed to give him several complete drenchings. But, being thus tolerably well protected, the Captain knew that the youth was not likely to receive any serious detriment from the elements; experience having shown him that people rarely even take cold, under the most adverse circumstances, from sleeping on the deck of a vessel at sea.

In this manner then passed the night-hours; Augustus finding himself enabled, amidst the noisy pattering of the rain above, and the ceaseless din of the waters around and below, to snatch an agitated and

little-refreshing repose. How different the sleep he might this same night have enjoyed beneath the roof whose shelter he had so causelessly deserted; in the home made desolate by his unprovoked absence; and under the watchful care of that fond mother, whose grief was at this moment nearly insupportable upon his account!

The first sounds that met the ears of Leland at early morning, were the not unwelcome exclamations of several of the passengers at first sight of the coast of Ireland. He just raised himself to look in the direction to which they were pointing; but the distance appeared so great, that he derived little comfort from the view. He once again therefore “changed his weary side” upon the hard couch

he had so long occupied; and though the rain was now over, cast not from him the thick folds of sail-cloth which the wet had vainly sought to penetrate, but on the contrary, as he felt numbed by the night-air, drew this rude and unsightly mantle still more closely round him. Nay, so oppressed was he with his various distressful feelings, that he could not summon spirits to rise, even when he heard the numerous expressions of admiration that burst from those around, as the vessel more nearly approached the beautiful Bay of Dublin; its waters, and the surrounding shores, now all resplendent with the beams of the morning sun. The book of Nature's glories appeared as though suddenly closed to him;

illness, mortification, remorse, and the humbling sense of being utterly at the disposal and mercy of a seemingly most harsh and tyrannous stranger, had combined to deprive him of the enjoyment, that in other circumstances he would undoubtedly have derived from the contemplation of so lovely a scene.

When at last the packet was made fast to the pier of the new harbour behind the Hill of Howth, its motion having then entirely ceased, and the deck resembling only the level surface of the ground, he ventured to rise from his uneasy couch, while the passengers were eagerly pressing to the vessel's side, and not a few of them were clamorously busy in securing or directing the proper disposal of their

luggage, &c. Leland alone looked as one who had no part or lot in what was going forward: he stood, with a blank expression of countenance, regarding what he saw in a manner that would almost have indicated that nothing whatever was passing before his eyes. At length, he also, with what purpose he knew not, was slowly stepping along the plank, laid for the passage to the pier, when the arm of the Captain arrested him.

“Softly, my lad!” that most terrible of men to Augustus exclaimed to him, “you are under my charge till I can find a way to bestow you safely at your mother’s; and I shall take good care that you do not run away from *me*, depend upon it.” “Morris,” he continued, “if this youngster so

much as sets a foot upon the pier, look to have your discharge before we sail again." Without another word, the Captain himself then passed to the landing-place, and, equally with his passengers, pursued the road to Dublin.

CHAP. X.

Two days elapsed before the vessel, thronged with a band of fresh occupants, re-started for Holyhead: during which time, the almost intolerable weariness and disgust experienced by Leland from his confinement, may be imagined. The man to whom he was entrusted, executed the orders given him with the most exact fidelity; so that these two days presented no

change of scene within the packet, but that occasioned by his transitions from the deck to the cabin, and from the cabin back to the deck; and no alteration of the prospect from his prison, which consisted invariably of the poor fishing-town and barren headland of Howth, in one direction, and the wide and pathless ocean on the other. And greatly as he now wished, yes, from the very bottom of his soul, to be at home again, he found it impossible to contemplate a renewal of all he had suffered on his voyage *to* Ireland, without absolute terror.

The morning for the destined sail was lowering and squally; but the wind, in every capricious gust, blew direct for the coast of Wales. The

waves without the harbour, as Leland perceived, rose to a height that, he could not but imagine, must infallibly bring destruction to the packet, if her commander ventured to sea in such weather; but the commander himself, on the contrary, appeared pleased with the prospect before him, cheerfully expressing his full assurance of being able, with such a wind, to reach Holyhead before night-fall. Accordingly, they stood out to sea; and then commenced a scene, of the horrors of which Leland could have previously formed no idea. The sea, to his conceptions, rolled in perfect mountains; the packet was alternately borne in air upon their tops, and sunk in the dark abysses between them; and while many on board, entirely

given up to their fears, shrieked at every ascent and descent upon the waters, Leland himself, mute, but pale and trembling, held with all his strength to the mast—a precaution, indeed, in some measure rendered necessary by the frequent passage of the billows over the deck, threatening in their course to hurry him along with them into the ocean. All this, to seamens' eyes, amounted only to a *squall*; and the single precautionary order issued by the Captain was, to reef his topsails. But the dread with which a scene like this inspired Augustus, and all not accustomed to behold such, together with the nearly universal illness the tumultuous agitation of the waves occasioned, it must be needless to describe. Such a

passage, performed in *thirteen hours*, had our voyagers on the present occasion, from the pier of Howth to that of Holyhead.

After what has been said, it will be almost unnecessary to mention that his short naval experience operated as a sufficient cure for our hero's turn for leaving home in quest of—*romance*. His adventures till he again reached the Castle, under the care of a friend of the kindly-severe Captain, were only those of the every-day traveller by a stage-coach. He was received, it must be owned, far too indulgently by his mother, and not greatly less so, owing to her influence, by Mr. Mason. But, as we have much satisfaction in adding, he, from the day of his return, applied himself with

proper diligence to the performance of the duties enjoined him by his preceptor; and, as Mrs. Leland took especial care that a romance should never afterwards enter her doors, his mind, receiving only a natural and healthy exercise of its powers, recovered the vigour of which it had been deprived through a long course of pernicious reading. It was then not long before his ideas became in most respects suited to the world of real life, and ceased to revel in that of extravagant and romantic fiction. A change thus happily begun, was completed and confirmed by his future intercourse with the metropolis, in the character of an *apprentice* to a highly respectable tradesman there; who dying before Augustus had quite

finished his term, the young man succeeded to the business of his employer, and was enabled by successful application to provide for the declining years of his mother, in a manner equally becoming in the son, and suitable to the early expectations, and the unfortunately growing necessities, of the parent. In after life, if the memory of one person in the world, next to that of his Tutor, was more especially revered by him, it was that of the somewhat abrupt but excellent-hearted Captain of the Dublin Packet, who had so well contrived to adapt the salutary discipline of a short sea-voyage, as A CURE FOR THE WANDERINGS OF YOUTHFUL ROMANCE.



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